



**Testimony to the Committee on Human Services
On the Foster Youth Rights Amendment Act of 2012**

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Good Morning Council Member Graham and other Committee members. My name is Andre Johnson I am 18 years old and I currently work at the Young Womens Project on the Foster Care Campaign, where I fight for youth rights in the system. I am here to support the Foster Youth Rights Amendment Act of 2012.

I am not in the foster care system but I have a few friends that are in group homes. Now that I am working at YWP I understand the rights that youth are supposed to have. The Foster Youth Rights Amendment Act of 2012 Rights clearly states that youth should have clean and comfortable beds. My friends tell me things like their beds are old and filthy and they want new ones

The Bill states that youth should have reasonable privacy when using telephone. My friends should not be telling me that they don't have doors or someone is on the phone when they are on the phone.

The Bill states that youth do not have to use allowance to purchase hygiene, clothes food, or other items. Yet my friends can't buy new clothes because they can't by food. My friends feel down and they don't have any new clothes. They don't even want to go out.

I value all my rights and I want my friends to have the same rights. I can eat when I want. I can have three meals a day. I go outside when I want to without an early curfew. I live in a clean house. I lend a helping hand and I give them clothes but it makes me think why people are being treated like that. It could be me there.

The Bill should be taken just as seriously as the constitutional bill of rights. You don't want the youth of the future to be walking around with raggedy clothes, bites from bet bugs. They don't deserve it.

Things would have been so different if my friends would have known their rights and knew where to report. They would have reported the issues and their living conditions would have improved. They would not have had as much stress as they did. Thanking you for taking my testimony into consideration.