



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

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Good morning Council member Graham and other Committee members. My name is Jacquelyne Allen and I am 19 years old. I have been in the foster care system since 2009 when I was 16. I currently work at the Young Women's Project on the Foster Care Campaign, where I advocate for teens in foster care. I am here to testify in support of the Foster Youth Employment Amendment Act of 2012.

I want to be a Veterinary Assistant and open my own animal shelter some day. I always had a passion for animals, ever since I was four years old. I feel very strongly about the way they are treated. I am enrolled in Animal Behavior College, which I learned about while I was watching Animal Planet. They send my books. I study. I take the test on-line. The class will help me get a position working with animals.

I started working at 16 with summer and part-time work. Two years ago I had a summer job through SYEP where I did background stage prep for a play and I occasionally helped a catering business. I had a hard time making it to the SYEP job because it was far from my house. I didn't have money for transportation and didn't know how to get there. I started working for the Young Women's Project this past November where I work Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:30 to 7:00pm which I think is a good work schedule because I am fitting it in with school.

But I need to find a full time job. I look for jobs every day in person and on-line. I look in animal stores, fast food, security, and clothing stores. I mainly look for jobs working with animals or kids, but I'm also looking for one that pays well so I can support my son. Sometimes you have to go out of your comfort zone, because not all jobs are in DC. Mainly the jobs I am seeing are in Virginia. My mother is the one that told me that you can't always apply for jobs in DC. It's kind of hard to leave something that you're used to. But if that's the only way to get a job then you have to do what you need to do to get that job.

My mother and lawyer have given me tips on looking for jobs and my mentor from Kid's Peace, helped me write my resume in high school around 2010. When I was at Merritt High School they taught me how to do an interview. I know that I'm supposed to have good eye contact and communication skills, and be properly dressed. But you have



to make sure that you have enough money to get to your interviews on time. My family doesn't have a lot of money, so I have to figure out a way to get to work or to interviews. I have to spend the money I do make on my son, which makes it even harder for me.

I think the Foster Youth Employment Act is a good idea because it will help us get jobs and help us learn about a lot of work opportunities that we don't even know about. Training in job searching, interviewing, and communication skills would help me get job. CFSA hasn't taught me how to do any of these things. My lawyer told me about the job at YWP.

Thank you for listening to me today.