



COMMISSION TO ELIMINATE CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT FATALITIES

TELECONFERENCE MINUTES

December 3, 2015, 1:00-3:00 p.m. EST

Commissioners Attending via Telephone: Chairman David Sanders, Amy Ayoub, the Hon. Bud Cramer, Dr. Wade Horn, the Hon. Patricia Martin, Michael Petit, Jennifer Rodriguez, Dr. David Rubin, and Dr. Cassie Statuto Bevan

Commissioners Absent: Susan Dreyfus and Theresa Covington

Designated Federal Officer: Amy Templeman, acting executive director, attended the meeting.

Conduct of the Meeting: In accordance with the provisions of Public Law 92-463, the Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities held a teleconference meeting that was open to the public on December 3, 2015, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. The purposes of the meeting were to discuss the content as well as the approval process for the Commission's final report, specifically:

- Draft outline of the chapter on American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) children (https://eliminatechildabusefatalities.sites.usa.gov/files/2015/11/DRAFT_CECANF-Report_AI-AN-Children-CHAPTER-OUTLINE-for-12.3.15.pdf)
- Draft outline of the chapter on disproportionality (https://eliminatechildabusefatalities.sites.usa.gov/files/2015/11/DRAFT_CECANF-Report_Disproportionality-CHAPTER-OUTLINE-for-12.3.15.pdf)
- Draft glossary (https://eliminatechildabusefatalities.sites.usa.gov/files/2015/11/DRAFT_CECANF-Report_Glossary-for-12.3.pdf)

Opening Remarks

Chairman Sanders opened the meeting by reviewing the agenda (<https://eliminatechildabusefatalities.sites.usa.gov/files/2015/11/Meeting-Agenda-for-12.3.2015.pdf>). He noted that today's meeting would focus on the chapters on AI/AN children and on disproportionality, as well as the process for approving the entire report.

Chairman Sanders also laid the groundwork for the December 7-8 in-person meeting, which is scheduled to address the entire report, including the following:

- Draft Introduction
(https://eliminatechildabusefatalities.sites.usa.gov/files/2015/11/DRAFT_CECANF-Report_Introduction-for-12.3.15.pdf)
- Draft Chapter 1
(https://eliminatechildabusefatalities.sites.usa.gov/files/2015/11/DRAFT_CECANF-Report_Chapter-1_for-12.3.15.pdf)
- Draft recommendations for Chapters 2-4
(https://eliminatechildabusefatalities.sites.usa.gov/files/2015/11/DRAFT_CECANF-Report_Recommendations-Chapters-2-4-for-12.7.15.pdf)

Chapter on AI/AN Children

At the request of Chairman Sanders, Commissioner Martin provided some background on the draft recommendations for the final report chapter on AI/AN children. She noted the following:

- Both the subcommittee on AI/AN children and the subcommittee on disproportionality were in favor of the idea of demonstration projects carried out by states to identify best practices in addressing and preventing child abuse and neglect fatalities. These demonstration projects could be funded by public/private partnerships so that groups like the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the MacArthur Foundation could be involved.
- An example of a demonstration project would be an intake court for cases reported by social workers or mandated reporters who were concerned about the safety of a child aged 3 years or younger. The process would be based on the child advocacy center model and would involve a variety of professionals, including medical, substance abuse, mental health, and more. A judge would appoint a guardian ad litem for the child and would serve as mediator, and there would be ways for information to be shared among agencies. This model would bring the different professions together to meet with the family, assess their needs, and provide services.

Chairman Sanders noted that this pilot project idea sounded similar to what Commissioner Rubin had described in suggesting an innovation fund for states to use to test promising practices in preventing child abuse and neglect fatalities.

Commissioner Rubin suggested that the ideal would be an innovation fund wrapping around new state plans to prevent child abuse and neglect fatalities and involving both implementation and evaluation.

Chairman Sanders related this idea to a place-based strategy that targets communities that have a disproportionate number of children dying due to abuse and neglect. Those communities would be the priority when funding innovative programs.

Commissioner Martin moved on to discuss the recommendations from the AI/AN subcommittee, which were organized under three themes. Themes and lead recommendations follow:

- Collective Responsibility for Safety

- Address Jurisdiction Issues: The federal government should require that there be a jurisdictional committee composed of both state and tribal leaders to determine jurisdictional issues in criminal matters associated with child abuse and neglect fatalities.
- Tribes and States Sharing Data: Recognize the sovereignty of tribes and the shared interests among tribes, states, and the federal government to protect all children on both tribal and nontribal lands and to ensure that families have the supports they need. Tribes, states, and the federal government should have a common goal for sharing data across tribal and state child protection/child welfare systems that would be supported by the provision of resources and support for a data infrastructure to support tribes collecting and providing needed data.
- Federal Executive Branch Oversight: Mandate the appointment or strengthen an existing role of a staff person within the executive branch with oversight over every federal department concerning Indian affairs. This person should be looking at tribal policy in each department and reporting to someone in the White House with the authority to convene federal departments and hold them accountable.
- Measurement and Classification
 - Accurate Data: Ensure the accuracy of data/information and ensure that tribes have the capacity and tools to provide that data/information.
 - BIA and FBI Data Coordination: Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) data collection about AI/AN children and child fatalities should be coordinated to be complementary and comprehensive.
- Strengthen Child Protection and Develop New Tools and Strategies
 - Promote Peer-to-Peer Connections.
 - Promote a Multidisciplinary Approach.

Commissioner Martin noted that the recommendations were designed to address such issues as the relationships between tribes and a variety of federal agencies, accountability, the dearth of data on Indian children's deaths, and a lack of culturally competent service providers.

Chapter on Disproportionality

Commissioner Martin presented the recommendations from the subcommittee on disproportionality. There were four lead recommendations:

- **Quality Data:** Related to addressing issues of disproportionality and disparities, the collection and reporting of quality (accurate and complete) data around (1) the characteristics of child abuse and neglect fatality victims and (2) the characteristics, needs, supports, and services provided to children and their families before children ever become fatality victims needs to be a priority at the federal, state, and local levels to inform approaches to reducing the number of African American children and other overrepresented groups being victims of child abuse and neglect and child abuse and neglect fatalities.

- **Quality Services:** Quality services (effective, culturally appropriate, and targeted) are needed to support children and their families who are disproportionately represented in child welfare and other child-serving systems; efforts at the federal, state, and local levels need to address quality with the same emphasis as availability and accessibility.
- **Racial Equity Lens/Assessment:** To address issues of disproportionality and disparities, a racial equity lens and assessment process should be a part of developing service delivery models, the use of predictive analytics and other tools assessing risk, and specifically analyzing how to look at focused strategies for reducing the incidence of child abuse and neglect and child abuse and neglect fatalities.
- **Racial Equity Training:** Racial equity training should be required across federal, state, and local child welfare agencies and other child-serving systems to ensure that families disproportionately represented are served and supported by a workforce that is trained, prepared, and mobilized around equitable decision-making and shared accountability.

Commissioner Martin opened the discussion by noting that minority children are overrepresented in child welfare and overrepresented in child maltreatment deaths, particularly among children ages 3 and under. Often there is inequality in the services provided. Commissioner Martin noted that many minority parents work well with parenting coaches who come into their homes, and these services have better results than requiring parents to attend parenting classes.

In the subsequent discussion of the draft chapters on AI/AN children and on disproportionality, Commissioners made a number of points:

- Often, the child welfare leadership is African American, so it is not clear how implicit bias and racism occur in these jurisdictions.
- The history of Native Americans and African Americans cannot be ignored as it relates to poverty and other risk factors.
- While everyone has biases, the idea is to offer tools that help people make decisions that are less biased.
- Some of the recommendations made in the AI/AN chapter—for instance, the recommendation to amend school curricula to include information about AI/AN history—are beyond the scope of the Commission and should not be included in the final report.
- Several of the recommendations need to have a better link to reducing child maltreatment fatalities in order to be included in the final report.

Commissioner Sanders led a brief discussion about the final report content and process, as well as the upcoming in-person meeting on December 7-8. He noted that the final report introduction should capture the will of the Commission, while the first chapter should convey the urgency of the situation. Beyond that, there is a full set of recommendations for the Commissioners to consider. As the Commission works through each of the pieces of the report, they will vote on changes to the content.

During the subsequent discussion, the following points were made:

- An analogy to the urgency of addressing child maltreatment fatalities can be found in the Bush administration's approach to pandemic flu, which required memoranda of understanding from all governors.
- It is difficult to vote on recommendations without seeing a complete report.
- The report needs more analysis, including descriptions of the characteristics of perpetrators of both fatalities and near fatalities. Also, there should be more statistics and more references/citations.
- There are problems with the framework of the report.
- The report should include an estimate of the cost of the recommendations.

The teleconference adjourned at 2:29 p.m.

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing minutes are accurate and complete.



David Sanders, Chairman, Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities
3/14/2016