To amend title IV of the Social Security Act to require States to provide information about available benefits and services to kinship caregivers.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. YOUNG) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on ________________

A BILL

To amend title IV of the Social Security Act to require States to provide information about available benefits and services to kinship caregivers.

1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

2 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

3 This Act may be cited as the “Informing Grandfamilies Act”.

4 SEC. 2. STATE NOTIFICATIONS TO KINSHIP CAREGIVERS OF CHILD TANF RECIPIENTS.

5 (a) In General.—Section 408(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 608(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:
“(13) State requirements regarding notice and guidance to kinship caregivers.—

“(A) In general.—A State to which a grant is made under section 403 shall ensure that the State agency provides to any kinship caregiver, including grandparents and other relative caregivers, of a minor child if the child is a recipient of assistance under the State program funded under this part (or under a State program funded with qualified State expenditures (as defined in section 409(a)(7)(B)(i))), written notice that—

“(i) explains the options of the kinship caregiver under Federal, State, and local law to participate in the care and placement of the child, including the financial ramifications of the options and any options that may be lost by choosing certain benefits;

“(ii) describes the requirements under section 471(a)(10) to become a foster family home and the additional services and supports that are available for a child placed in such a home;
“(iii) if the State has elected the option to make guardianship assistance payments under section 471(a)(28), describes how the kinship caregiver may enter into an agreement with the State to receive the payments;

“(iv) describes policies under the State program funded under this part that may help kinship caregivers and the relative children they care for; and

“(v) provides direct contact information for kinship navigator programs described in section 427(a)(1) or other agencies and community organizations that provide resources and assistance, such as housing, supplemental nutrition assistance, health care, and child care.

“(B) TIMING OF NOTICE.—The notice required under subparagraph (A)—

“(i) shall be provided to a kinship caregiver of a minor child at the time that the kinship caregiver attends an eligibility interview for assistance (either on the kinship caregiver’s own behalf or on behalf of the child) under the State program funded
under this part (or under a State program
funded with qualified State expenditures
(as defined in section 409(a)(7)(B)(i))); or

“(ii) if the kinship caregiver (or the
minor child) is already receiving assistance
under such a program on the date of en-
actment of this paragraph, shall be sent to
the kinship caregiver as soon as practicable
after such date.

“(C) Provision of guidance to kinship
caregivers.—A State to which a grant is
made under section 403 shall ensure that the
State agency responsible for administering the
State program funded under this part employs
a resource employee who is trained to provide
guidance to kinship caregivers, including grand-
parents and other relative caregivers, of a
minor child if the child is a recipient of assist-
ance under the program (or under a State pro-
gram funded with qualified State expenditures
(as defined in section 409(a)(7)(B)(i))), on
legal options regarding custody and guardian-
ship of the child, including explaining to the
kinship caregiver how each legal option cor-
responds to the availability of benefits and serv-
ices, and who serves as a liaison with other agencies and community organizations that provide resources and assistance to kinship caregivers.”.

(b) INCLUSION IN STATE PLAN.—Section 402(a)(1)(B) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 602(a)(1)(B)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(vi) The document shall provide a detailed explanation of how the State intends to comply with section 408(a)(13).”.