



(Pearlie Knight, second from left, with fellow speakers)

Transcript of Pearlie Knight's testimony at the GU Congressional Briefing on Policies Impacting Grandparent Caregivers and Children in Foster Care

I'm kind of nervous because I've never been in a place with a lot of people.... I'm Pearlie Knight from Baltimore, MD. I was in Family Connections. And like he said I've had (my grandkids) ever since they were babies. And it's kind of hard, raising 2 kids. Every time they see something, they want, they want, want, want.

I'm 58 now, I will soon be 59 in August and it's more harder now than it was when I first got them because they're going to school now they see other kids want. And I'm on a fixed income and it seems to me that the little bit I get, they want, they want because they see somebody else, whether at school and then they come home and they say "grandma can I have this, grandma can I have that?" They don't go to their mother, they always come to me. And if I tell them "well, I got bills to pay and I'm not able to give it to you right now, maybe later" they don't understand it because the oldest one he has problems and at times you're in and out of school for him if I'm not going down [there], his mother is. And I feel like we sometimes we are [slighted], when it comes to bills and money because it costs money to raise your [grandchildren] and it's even more now then it was when I was bringing my own kids up.

And I was just wondering if there was a way that [any of you] here that could help me with something like a grant. I know that right now I'm not eligible for it, but I will soon be 60 years old and if I don't get it now then when am I...get the money? I think that it shouldn't be just for the people that [are certain] ages, I think that if you're a grandmother, if you're even 55 years old and if something like a grant comes up I think you are entitled to it.... It shouldn't be age, it shouldn't be 60, it shouldn't be 50. I think if you're a grandparent and if you're taking the responsibility of the mother then I think that grandparents have a right to...Please help me out.