

Senate Bill No. 288--Senator Washington

CHAPTER.....

AN ACT relating to the protection of children; authorizing certain counties that are required to provide protective services for children to enter into an agreement with the division of child and family services of the department of human resources to establish a pilot program to provide continuity of care for children who receive protective services; requiring the division to report to the legislature; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

WHEREAS, The system for providing protective services for children in this state is bifurcated, with services being provided both by county agencies and the division of child and family services of the department of human resources; and

WHEREAS, There are disparities between the payments made to providers of those services by the county agencies and the division; and

WHEREAS, Because of such disparities and because the county agencies and the division contract with different providers of foster care, the placement of a child in foster care is frequently disrupted to place the child with a different provider of foster care; and

WHEREAS, Frequently changing the placement of children in foster care is not in the best interests of those children; and

WHEREAS, On November 19, 1997, Congress enacted the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, which, as a condition to the receipt of federal money, requires a plan for the permanent placement of a child in foster care to be established no later than 12 months after a child has been placed in foster care; and

WHEREAS, To comply with this federal law requires diligent effort on the part of the county agencies and the division from the time that a child first enters the system for providing protective services; and

WHEREAS, The bifurcated system for providing protective services to children in this state does not uniformly provide the continuity in care and services that are necessary to establish a plan for the permanent placement of those children within the time frame required by federal law; now, therefore,

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. 1. A county that is required to provide protective services to children in that county pursuant to NRS 432B.325 may enter into an agreement with the division of child and family services of the department of human resources to establish a pilot program to provide continuity of care for children who receive protective services. A pilot program established pursuant to such an agreement may provide:

(a) For the county and the division of child and family services jointly to furnish services relating to the assessment of a child and planning for the provision of protective services to the child;

(b) For a child to be in the joint custody of the county and the division of child and family services;

(c) For continuity in the placement of a child in foster care;

(d) That the rate of payment by the county for foster care and shelter care must be equal to the rate of payment by the division of child and family services for foster care and shelter care;

(e) For continuity in the management of a case for the provision of protective services to a child; and

(f) For services designed to carry out a plan for the permanent placement of a child established pursuant to NRS 432B.590 or the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, Public Law 105-89.

2. Notwithstanding any specific statute to the contrary, for the purpose of a pilot program established pursuant to an agreement entered into pursuant to this section, the division of child and family services may deviate from the rate of payment for foster care approved by the legislature.

Sec. 2. On or before November 30, 2000, the division of child and family services of the department of human resources shall submit a report to the director of the legislative counsel bureau for transmittal to the appropriate legislative committee. The report must include the following information for each agreement entered into pursuant to section 1 of this act:

1. The number of children involved in the pilot project established pursuant to the agreement;

2. A description of the services provided to those children that includes:

(a) The name of the agency that provided the services; and

(b) The costs incurred by the agency that provided the services;

3. If available, the disposition of the cases of those children; and

4. An analysis of the benefits, if any, to the children involved in the pilot project and to the families of those children.

Sec. 3. This act becomes effective on July 1, 1999, and expires by limitation on June 30, 2001.

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