



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 213

February Session, 2004

Substitute House Bill No. 5345

House of Representatives, March 24, 2004

The Committee on Human Services reported through REP. VILLANO of the 91st Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PILOT PROGRAM FOR SPECIAL NEEDS ADOPTION.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Commissioner of Children
2 and Families may accept grants to create a two-year pilot program for
3 the adoption of two hundred special needs children, as defined in
4 section 17a-116 of the general statutes, and to reduce the time for such
5 an adoption to be finalized from forty-eight months to twenty-four
6 months. The commissioner shall establish the pilot program in
7 cooperation with the following agencies: The Jewish Family Services of
8 New Haven, The Village for Families and Children and Children and
9 Families Agency Inc. For purposes of the pilot program, such agencies
10 shall develop and implement strategies to reduce the time between the
11 removal of a special needs child from his or her home and a finalized
12 adoption.

13 (b) The Department of Children and Families shall conduct an

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 05 \$	FY 06 \$
Children & Families, Dept.	GF - Cost	775,000	775,000
Children & Families, Dept.	GF - Savings	Potential Minimal	Potential Minimal

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill requires the Department of Children and Families to establish a two-year pilot program to promote the adoption of 200 special needs children and reduce the length of time to finalize the adoption of these same children from 48 to 24 months. The agency would also be required to obtain an independent evaluation of the pilot program and report to the Human Services Committee and the Select Committee on Children by January 15, 2007.

The department has recently been awarded a five year federal Adoption Opportunities Program grant (at \$350,000 per year) to support efforts to find permanent homes for children currently living in foster homes in greater Hartford. The initiative aims to achieve adoptive or subsidized guardianship placements of 30 children in the first year of the program and 40 children annually thereafter.

Expanding this program model to serve 200 children over a two year period would result in a cost of approximately \$650,000 in each of FYs 05 and 06. Retention of an independent contractor for purposes of conducting a program evaluation would cost an additional \$125,000 annually.

To the extent that the pilot program results in an increase in the

number of adoptions of special needs children formerly in foster care, a minimal savings to the state will result. Subsidized adoption rates, which average \$23.03 per day, are approximately three percent less than foster care rates for children of comparable ages.

It should be noted that while the bill allows DCF to accept grants to implement the pilot program, no federal or private funding has been identified for this purpose to date.

OLR Bill Analysis

SHB 5345

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PILOT PROGRAM FOR SPECIAL NEEDS ADOPTION.

SUMMARY:

The Office of Legislative Research does not analyze Special Acts.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Select Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference

Yea 13 Nay 0

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 17 Nay 0