



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 6411

January Session, 2009

* _____HB06411APP___042409_____*

AN ACT CONCERNING A REDUCTION IN CHILD POVERTY AND INVESTMENT IN PREVENTION.

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) Not later than fourteen
2 days after the effective date of this section, the Commissioner of Social
3 Services shall implement, in accordance with this section, an efficient
4 and coordinated response for children and families to ensure that their
5 basic needs are met. In implementing the efficient and coordinated
6 response, the commissioner shall consult with (1) the chairpersons of
7 the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
8 cognizance of matters relating to human services, public health and
9 appropriations and the select committee of the General Assembly
10 having cognizance of matters relating to children; (2) the Child Poverty
11 and Prevention Council; and (3) any community action agency or other
12 organization serving children or families.

13 (b) In order to implement the efficient and coordinated response, the
14 commissioner shall invest in improved and streamlined prevention
15 services to better serve children and families and prevent them from
16 falling into poverty. The efficient and coordinated response shall be
17 designed to (1) promote combined, online or multiple-site application
18 and enrollment processes for programs that serve children or families;
19 (2) promote cross-enrollment policies, colocation of services and

20 interdepartmental coordination and consolidation of staff assigned to
21 such programs; (3) effectuate short-term waivers of income
22 garnishment by state agencies in cases where such waivers are deemed
23 appropriate by the commissioner to protect children and families from
24 hardship and keep families together; (4) promote cost-saving measures
25 to prevent homelessness and increase housing stability for children
26 and families; (5) encourage or require homeless shelters to accept every
27 member of a family at the same time or work to find adequate
28 alternative arrangements for a family if lack of capacity prevents a
29 shelter from serving all members of a family at the same time; (6)
30 review program eligibility requirements and other policies to ensure
31 that unaccompanied homeless children access critical services that
32 such children might otherwise have been prevented from receiving
33 due to age or guardianship requirements; (7) explore utilization of
34 energy assistance programs authorized under the Low Income Home
35 Energy Assistance Act of 1981 to maximize and increase monthly food
36 stamp benefits for families who live in subsidized housing; and (8)
37 track the impact of such programs and services on children and
38 families.

39 (c) Not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section
40 and quarterly thereafter until June 30, 2011, the commissioner shall
41 report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general
42 statutes, to the Governor and the joint standing committees of the
43 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to human
44 services, public health and appropriations and the select committee of
45 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
46 children on the implementation of the efficient and coordinated
47 response, and the progress made to impede family crisis and prevent
48 children and families from falling into poverty.

49 (d) For purposes of this section, "programs that serve children or
50 families" shall include, but not be limited to, (1) the HUSKY Program;
51 (2) Care 4 Kids; (3) the supplemental nutrition assistance program; (4)
52 temporary assistance for needy families; (5) WIC; (6) heating and
53 rental assistance; (7) eviction prevention services; (8) free and reduced

54 breakfast and lunch programs; (9) family literacy programs; (10)
 55 fatherhood programs; (11) job training; (12) economic security
 56 programs; (13) the food stamp employment and training program
 57 established under section 17b-105f of the general statutes; and (14) the
 58 poverty reduction strategies, as defined in section 17b-105e of the
 59 general statutes.

60 (e) In implementing the efficient and coordinated response, the
 61 commissioner shall attempt to meet the prevention goals and
 62 recommendations developed pursuant to section 4-67x of the general
 63 statutes.

64 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) To maximize the outcome of
 65 children and families in this state, the joint standing committees of the
 66 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
 67 appropriations and human services, in collaboration with the Office of
 68 Policy and Management, shall maximize the use of federal funds
 69 available to this state for any initiatives related to children and
 70 families, including, but not limited to, child poverty reduction
 71 strategies developed by the Child Poverty and Prevention Council
 72 pursuant to section 4-67x of the general statutes and programs with
 73 data-driven decision making that serve children and families.

74 (b) The chairpersons of said committees and the Office of Policy and
 75 Management shall submit a joint report, in accordance with the
 76 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the Governor, the
 77 president pro tempore of the Senate and the speaker of the House of
 78 Representatives regarding such use of federal funds pursuant to
 79 subsection (a) of this section not later than sixty days after the effective
 80 date of this section.

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| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: | | |
| Section 1 | <i>from passage</i> | New section |
| Sec. 2 | <i>from passage</i> | New section |

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| <i>KID</i> | <i>Joint Favorable Subst. C/R</i> | HS |
| <i>HS</i> | <i>Joint Favorable</i> | |
| <i>APP</i> | <i>Joint Favorable</i> | |