



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 650

February Session, 2010

Substitute House Bill No. 5302

House of Representatives, April 27, 2010

The Committee on Appropriations reported through REP. GERAGOSIAN of the 25th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING AN ACTION PLAN TO IMPROVE FAMILY PRESERVATION AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS.

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) As part of the
2 comprehensive strategic planning process established under
3 subsection (b) of section 17a-3 of the general statutes and within
4 existing budgetary resources, the Commissioner of Children and
5 Families shall develop a plan to achieve improved outcomes for clients
6 of the Department of Children and Families' child welfare bureau who
7 receive family preservation and support services. In developing the
8 plan, the department shall: (1) Conduct an assessment of the service
9 needs of the department's child welfare client population, including, at
10 a minimum, an analysis of current service system capacity and
11 demand, as indicated by program wait list information; and (2)
12 examine relevant research to identify the most effective service models,

13 including, but not limited to, evidence-based models, for meeting such
14 needs. Not later than September 1, 2011, the department shall submit a
15 draft plan to the office of the court monitor at the Department of
16 Children and Families, the Child Advocate and the State Advisory
17 Council on Children and Families for review and comment.

18 (b) Not later than July 15, 2012, the Commissioner of Children and
19 Families shall submit the final plan, in accordance with the provisions
20 of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees
21 of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
22 human services and appropriations and the budgets of state agencies,
23 and the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee.
24 The final plan shall include, but not be limited to: (1) Summaries of the
25 client needs assessment and relevant research on program
26 effectiveness; (2) a description of (A) the services provided under each
27 child welfare family preservation and support program as it currently
28 operates, (B) all services under the child welfare family preservation
29 and support programs that the department intends to provide as a
30 result of its needs assessment and completed research on program
31 effectiveness at current funding levels, and (C) anticipated services
32 that would be provided under each program in the event of a ten per
33 cent increase or ten per cent decrease from the current funding levels;
34 (3) a detailed description of the procedures and resources needed to
35 maintain adequate quality assurance and quality improvement
36 functions for the department's child welfare family preservation and
37 support programs; (4) comments on the plan, if any, received from the
38 court monitor at the Department of Children and Families, the Child
39 Advocate, and the State Advisory Council on Children and Families;
40 and (5) a timetable setting forth steps for plan implementation over a
41 five-year time period through July 15, 2017. The final plan shall also
42 include a strategy for ensuring the department only provides child
43 welfare family preservation and support programs and services that
44 are based on research demonstrating their effectiveness, or when such
45 research is not available, evidence the programs and services are
46 meeting identified client needs. In addition, the final plan shall include
47 a process for collecting and analyzing the data needed to evaluate the

48 effectiveness of such programs and services.

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

APP *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill would require the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to develop a plan to improve outcomes for clients receiving family preservation and support services. The plan must include an assessment of child welfare service needs and a research evaluation of effective service models. The bill states that the plan is to be developed within existing resources.

As no funding for an assessment or research evaluation has been included within sHB 5018 (the Revised FY 11 Budget, as favorably reported by the Appropriations Committee) it is anticipated that the scope of the assessment will be restricted to currently reported data on family preservation and support services, and the research efforts will be limited to identifying previously reported effective service models. This can be accomplished without resulting in a fiscal impact.

It should be noted that a comprehensive assessment to determine the needs of the state's child welfare population, and an evaluation of effective service models, would require the Department of Children and Families to retain outside consultant services at a cost of \$250,000 - \$300,000 over a two year period.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 5302****AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING AN ACTION PLAN TO IMPROVE FAMILY PRESERVATION AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS.****SUMMARY:**

By law, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) is required to establish five-year strategic plans, which it submits biennially to the legislature. This bill requires DCF, within the confines of that law and existing budgetary resources, to develop a plan to achieve improved outcomes for family preservation and support services clients. These services are intended to help at-risk families remain intact.

Under the bill, DCF must (1) assess the service needs of its child welfare population, including an analysis of the department's current service capacity and demand, as indicated by client waiting lists; and (2) examine research to identify the most effective service models to meet clients' needs, including evidence-based models.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

DRAFT AND FINAL PLANS

By September 1, 2011, the commissioner must submit a draft plan to the *Juan F.* court monitor, child advocate, and State Advisory Council on Children and Families for review and comment.

By July 15, 2012, she must submit the final plan to the Appropriations, Human Services, and Program Review and Investigations committees. The plan must include:

1. summaries of the client needs assessment and relevant research

- on program effectiveness;
2. descriptions of (a) services provided under each child welfare family preservation and support program the department operates, (b) all services provided under programs it plans to operate as a result of its needs assessment and completed research on program effectiveness at current funding levels, and (c) anticipated services under each program in case its funding level increases or decreases by 10%;
 3. a detailed description of procedures and resources needed to maintain adequate quality assurance and improved functions for its family preservation and support services program;
 4. comments received from any of the entities to which the commissioner submitted the draft plan; and
 5. a timetable showing steps for a five-year plan implementation ending July 15, 2017.

The plan must also include a strategy for ensuring that DCF only provides family preservation and support services that are based on research demonstrating their effectiveness, or when research is not available, evidence the programs and services are meeting identified client needs. The plan must also include a process for collecting and analyzing the data needed to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and services.

BACK GROUND

Legislative History

The House referred the bill to the Human Services Committee which voted it out favorably on March 23. The House then referred the bill (File 364) to the Appropriations Committee, which voted out a substitute on April 19, 2010. The substitute added the budgetary restrictions.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Program Review and Investigations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference
Yea 12 Nay 0 (03/11/2010)

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 14 Nay 5 (03/23/2010)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 35 Nay 15 (04/19/2010)