Committee on Children

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-885
Title: AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY INTERACTIONS BETWEEN GRANDPARENTS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

Vote Date: 3/7/2019
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 2/28/2019
File No.: 

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SPONSORS OF BILL:
Committee on Children

REASONS FOR BILL:
To create a task force to analyze interactions between grandparents and the Department of Children and Families.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Vannessa Dorantes, Commissioner, Department of Children and Families:
The commissioner testified in opposition to this bill. The Department understands the vital importance of placing a child with a relative, such as a grandparent, whenever possible. With this being said, the Department notifies relatives when a child is separated from parents and the juvenile court may place the child with relatives if deemed beneficial to the child. This bill would mandate DCF to disclose certain information to the task force that is not easily accessible. The cost of manually rifling through data to compile two years’ worth to provide for this task force would be a huge burden to the Department.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Emidio Cerasale, Founder and President, Grandparents Advocate of America:
Emidio testified in support of any bill that would allow grandparents to have visitation rights to their grandchildren in DCF care. Furthermore, he would like grandparents to be the first consideration before foster care when determining placement for a child/family involved with the Department.
NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

See response from administration/agency.

Reported by:  Mikhela Hull                   Date: 3/18/19