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CLM Endorsed Legislation

AN ACT RELATIVE TO MANDATED REPORTER REFORM (H.137)

The bill establishes a Special Commission to review the existing mandated reporter law and make recommendations to improve the response and prevention of child abuse and neglect. The Commission will be composed of the OCA, DCF, EEC, the AG, CPCS, and CLM.

FILED BY: SEN. JOAN LOVELY & REP. KAY KHAN
LEAD BY: CHAIR KAY KHAN

AN ACT RELATIVE TO EXPUNGEMENT (S.900)

In 2018, Massachusetts passed legislation that created an opportunity to expunge juvenile and adult criminal records for folks whose offense was charged prior to their 21st birthday. The law created a significant limit: In order to expunge a record, there can only be one court case on the record. In effect, anyone who has a second or subsequent court case would be ineligible for expungement. This is a missed opportunity to tackle recidivism. This bill will close major gaps in the proposal by removing the only one court case restriction for cases charged prior to the individual's 21st birthday and instead would limit eligibility by how long ago the individual had their last court case—allowing individuals to expunge their records if their last offense was three years (for misdemeanors) or seven years (for felonies) ago and they have no subsequent court case since. It will also reduce the number of offenses that are categorically ineligible for expungement (while keeping judicial discretion on the review of expungement requests), reduce the time to seal juvenile records for non-adjudications and allow for automatic sealing of eligible records.

FILED BY: SEN. CYNTHIA STONE CREEM, REP. MARJORIE DECKER & REP. KAY KHAN
LEAD: CITIZENS FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE

AN ACT GRANTING EQUAL ACCESS TO ORIGINAL BIRTH CERTIFICATES TO ALL PERSONS BORN IN MASSACHUSETTS (H.1892, S.1267)

Current Massachusetts law denies adopted persons born in Massachusetts between July 17, 1974 and January 1, 2008 access to their original birth certificates. This bill would allow all adopted persons equal access to their original birth certificates.

FILED BY: SEN. ANNE GOBI, REP. SEAN GARBALLEY & REP. DAN CULLINANE
LEAD: ACCESS MASSACHUSETTS

AN ACT TO END CHILD MARRIAGE IN MASSACHUSETTS (H.1478, S.24)

The bill would forbid anyone under age 18 from getting married in Massachusetts. Currently, someone under 18 can get married with approval from a parent and a judge. The law doesn't specify a minimum age, leaving that to the discretion of a judge.

FILED BY: REP. KAY KHAN & SEN. HARRIETTE CHANDLER
LEAD: CHILD MARRIAGE BAN COALITION

AN ACT RELATIVE TO MULTISYSTEM YOUTH (H.1514)

The 2018 Criminal Justice law created protections prohibiting the incarceration (secure detention) of juveniles who have "been alleged to be dependent on the court, neglected or abused". This language essentially prohibits the detention for all kids in the care and custody of DCF and those subject to the "special immigrant juvenile status". This bill would clarify that such a child shall not be detained by lack of placement by another agency, unless there was a finding of dangerousness or the child requests that placement.

FILED BY: REP. JOAN MESCHINO
LEAD: CITIZENS FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE

AN ACT RELATIVE TO CHILDREN WITH MEDICAL COMPLEXITY (H.1141, S.680)

This bill would direct a comprehensive statewide study of children (under age 21) with medical complexities and provide valuable data on this special population. There is special language in the bill to access data from kids in DCF custody, DYS custody and those kids in Special Kids Special Care Program.

FILED BY: SEN. SAL DIDOMENICO & REP. CLAIRE CRONIN
LEAD: BOSTON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

AN ACT RELATIVE TO ABUSIVE PRACTICES TO CHANGE SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY IN MINORS ("CONVERSION THERAPY BAN") (H2187, S.70)

This bill will ban deceptive conversion practices that can lead to depression, substance abuse, social withdrawal, and suicidality.

FILED BY: REP. SHAWN DOOLEY & SEN. MARK MONTIGNY
LEAD: CONVERSION THERAPY BAN COALITION

AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE HARMFUL DISTRIBUTION OF SEXUALLY EXPLICIT VISUAL MATERIAL (H.76)

This bill modernizes laws governing the distribution of sexually explicit images and empowers District Attorneys with additional tools to protect children. The bill requires schools to update their bullying prevention plans to include policies and education relative to social media, online behavior.

LEAD: GOVERNOR BAKER ADMINISTRATION

AN ACT RELATIVE TO FAIR PAY FOR COMPARABLE WORK (H.138, S.1077)

This bill would set a schedule to fully eliminate the pay disparity between state workers and those employed by private, community-based human services nonprofits who are doing similar work. The bill would seek to eliminate the pay disparity no later than July 1, 2023, and it would authorize reports from the administration on the current pay disparity between workers and new strategies to recruit and retain human services workers at community-based nonprofits.

FILED BY: REP. SHAWN DOOLEY & SEN. MARK MONTIGNY
LEAD: CONVERSION THERAPY BAN COALITION

FOSTER CARE REVIEW OFFICE BILL (H.112, S.61)

In Massachusetts, foster care review is housed in DCF. It is an internal DCF department. This structure creates challenges and potential conflicts of interest for ensuring a robust and independent review with transparency, accountability, oversight. This bill will create an independent review process that addresses these challenges both at the individual case level and at the systems level.

FILED BY: SEN. JO COMERFORD & REP. TRICIA FARLEY-BOUVIER
LEAD: THE CHILDREN'S UNION (THE POLICY ARM OF FRIENDS OF CHILDREN)

AN ACT RELATIVE TO FOSTER PARENT RIGHTS (H.113)

This bill ensures that foster parents will be treated with dignity and respect, not be discriminated against based on the basis of their gender, religion, race or color and be provided appropriate training and support. The bill also creates a Task Force to handle complaints against foster parents.

FILED BY: REP. TRICIA FARLEY-BOUVIER & REP. JOSEPH MCKENNA
LEAD: FOSTER PARENT RIGHTS COALITION, A COALITION ORGANIZED BY REP. TRICIA FARLEY-BOUVIER IN CONCERT WITH THE MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN

AN ACT TO PROVIDE IDENTIFICATION TO HOMELESS YOUTH AND FAMILIES (S.2043, H.3066)

This bill will establish a fee waiver process for youth and adults experiencing homelessness. It will create a process for individuals experiencing homelessness to apply for IDs if they cannot meet the existing criteria, such as alternative proof of Massachusetts residency that does not require a permanent address (looking to documents already accepted by other Massachusetts state agencies).

FILED BY: SEN. HARRIETTE CHANDLER & REP. KAY KHAN
LEAD: MASSACHUSETTS COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS



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CLM's Priority Legislation

AN ACT ENSURING THE CONTINUOUS HEALTHCARE COVERAGE FOR YOUTH WHO HAVE AGED OUT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (H.124, S.35)

This bill will codify the provision in the Affordable Care Act that allows youth who have aged out of DCF to receive MassHealth benefits until they turn 26. Additionally, it will require that these youths are automatically enrolled annually until no longer eligible.

FILED BY: SEN. SAL DIDOMENICO & REP. DANIELLE GREGOIRE
LEAD: CHILDREN'S LEAGUE OF MASSACHUSETTS

AN ACT EXPANDING ACCESS TO ADOPTIONS (H.1492, S.32)

Siblings in Massachusetts are prohibited from adopting their siblings, even in situations where a much older sibling is independent, stable, and can financially support the child. Currently, siblings can obtain guardianship of their younger siblings, but guardianships only provide temporary caregiving support, while adoptions are permanent.

FILED BY: SEN. JOAN LOVELY & REP. JACK LEWIS
LEAD: CHILDREN'S LEAGUE OF MASSACHUSETTS



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CLM's Budget Priorities

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS (FRCs)

\$18.35M, AND CARRY-OVER OF \$2.7M IN EXPANSION FUNDS FROM FY19.5, CONVERT 5 MICRO FRCs TO MACROS & 2 NEW MACROS

FRCs were created to meet the needs of families in the community. They are places where families can seek help from knowledgeable professionals who can point them in the direction of services that will lead to success. There has been exponential growth in the numbers of families served by FRCs since their inception in 2015. In 2015 5,000 individuals were served by FRC and three years later they have served over 48,300 individuals, over nine times the amount served initially. The last state budget proposed increased funding for Family Resource Centers, CLM will continue advocate for more support of FRCs.

FAMILY SUPPORT AND STABILIZATION SERVICES PROVIDED BY DCF

\$55.5M, AN INCREASE OF \$5 MILLION FROM FY19

Family Support and Stabilization services are services provided to children and families in their homes have been shown to have great outcomes, resulting in higher rates of employment for families, while simultaneously lowering delinquency and teenage pregnancy. A 4% increase will allow another 900 families to have access to the services they need to stabilize so that children can remain safe and at home.

THE OFFICE OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE (OCA)

\$1.3M, A \$125K INCREASE FROM THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR

The office is charged with identifying gaps in services and trends across all child-serving agencies and is in a prime position to conduct cross-agency work for the betterment of our youth. Cross-agency collaboration is necessary to address these issues—just with these examples, the Department of Children and Families, Department of Youth Services, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of Higher Education, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Transitional Assistance, and the Department of Housing and Community Development would ideally be at the table. The OCA is in a unique position to bring these parties together to generate solutions for our youth.