



An Act to Improve Permanency and Placement Stability

SECTION BY SECTION SUMMARY

SECTION 1.

- This section will provide each child age 7 or older in DCF's care with the opportunity to express their preferred custody placement. This also allows for each parent to provide any name of an adult who can provide custody to their children. And requires DCF to first check and consider these preferred placements as expressed by the child and parent prior to placing in another foster home.

SECTION 2.

- Pursuant to federal and state laws, judges must oversee many important social-worker decisions in child protection cases. Judges must decide whether "reasonable efforts have been made"--whether an agency acted properly when it removed a child from parental care, whether it provided parents with adequate supportive services during the reunification period and whether it took appropriate actions to ensure a child was placed in a permanent home. For several reasons, judges rarely make "no reasonable efforts findings". This legislation will require that the issue of whether reasonable efforts have been made be raised at a series of existing hearings including, both the ex parte removal hearing and the temporary orders hearing under section 24, the pre-trial conference, and permanency hearings under section 29B.

SECTION 3.

- Requires a regional clinical review team to conduct a review when any child or young adult has experienced more than 2 placements in a single foster care episode. The review will include an examination of the physical, mental, and emotional effects experienced by that child and a recommendation for additional services to mitigate these effects.

SECTION 4.

- Section 3 of Chapter 210 is amended by inserting a paragraph that allows a child who is 12 years or older to petition the court to reinstate parental rights if more than 2 years have passed since the entry of the order and if the permanency goal for the child is no longer adoption.