



AN ACT ENHANCING CHILD WELFARE PROTECTIONS

[S.148](#) Sen. Kennedy / [H.262](#) Rep. Livingstone

OVERVIEW

Comprehensive bill enhancing the child welfare system's ability **to protect and improve the wellbeing of children and families** through improvements to:

- reporting on disproportionality data and transition age youth (TAY) outcomes
- timely notifications to youth attorneys
- quality improvement efforts & interagency collaboration led by the Office of the Child Advocate
- timely school enrollment; and more.

IMPACTS

Disproportionality & TAY Outcomes Data

- Improves policies and services addressing racial and socioeconomic factors, gaps in programs, and outcomes for children and emerging adults.
- Increases accountability for quality of services and measurable results.

Additional Quality Improvements

- Better protects the rights and meets the needs of youth.
- Improves communication between parties and oversight.

NEED

Trends from the Dept. of Children and Families' FY2023 Annual Report

- Children of color are greatly overrepresented in the child welfare system.
- 700 transition-age youth (TAY) turned 18-years-old in the foster care system without a permanency plan in place last year.
- 32% of youth aged 12+ exit the foster care system ("age out") without permanent, legal connections to family or caregivers.



OPEN DCF CASES

(Compared to White children)

- Hispanic/Latinx: 1.7x
- Black: 1.5x



PROTECTIVE INTAKES (51A) SCREENING

(Compared to White children)

- Hispanic/Latinx: 1.7x
- Black: 1.8x



AGING OUT OF CARE & NO PERMANENCY

(Compared to White children)

- Hispanic/Latinx: 1.1x
- Black: 1.2x



OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENTS

(Compared to White children)

- Hispanic/Latinx: 1.6x
- Black: 1.6x
- Native American: 2.2x



ONLY **54%** OF TAY WHO "AGED OUT" OF FOSTER CARE FOUND PART- OR FULL-TIME **EMPLOYMENT** BY AGE 26.



AT AGE 21, **49%** OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO EXITED STATE CARE EXPERIENCED **HOMELESSNESS** WITHIN THE PREVIOUS TWO YEARS.



YOUTH CURRENTLY INVOLVED IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM ARE **38X MORE LIKELY TO BE DETAINED** THAN THOSE WHO ARE NOT INVOLVED.



STUDENTS EXPERIENCING FOSTER CARE ARE ABOUT **3.5X MORE LIKELY TO DROP OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL**.