

Legislative Link

A legislative update provided by the United Way of Florida, Inc.

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United Way of Florida

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HB 11 Assault or Battery on Homeless Persons (Taylor and others)

Currently, section 775.085, F.S. provides that the penalty for any felony or misdemeanor offense must be reclassified if the commission of the offense evidences prejudice based on the race, color, ancestry, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, mental or physical disability or advanced age of the victim. This is commonly known as the "hate crime" statute. HB 11 amends this statute to include offenses evidencing prejudice based on the homeless status of the victim. This will have the effect of increasing the maximum sentence that can be imposed for an offense against a homeless person where the commission of the offense evidences prejudice based on the homeless status of the victim.

The bill also creates a new section of statute which requires the imposition of a three-year minimum mandatory sentence upon a person who is convicted of aggravated assault or aggravated battery upon a homeless person. This will apply regardless of whether the offender knew the homeless status of the victim. The bill also authorizes the judge to impose a fine of up to \$10,000 and to order the defendant to perform up to 500 hours of community service. The bill provides that adjudication of guilt or imposition of sentence may not be suspended, deferred or withheld.

Last Action: 3/21/07 Now in Safety and Security Council

HB 51 Transitional Services for Adolescents and Young Adults with Disabilities (Davis and others)

House Bill 51 creates the Health and Transition Services Program in the Children's Medical Services program within the Department of Health. This program will serve 14-26 year old persons with chronic health-related or developmental conditions in transitioning from children's health and education services to adult health care and employment. The bill requires the program to provide enrollees with specified services and referral information.

Last Action: 3/27/07 Favorable with CS by Healthcare Council

CS/CS/SB 188 Domestic Violence (Judiciary Committee, Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee, Senator Aronberg and others)

This bill requires employers to allow employees to request and take up to three working days of leave, with or without pay, within a 12-month period if the employee or a family or household member is the victim of domestic violence and the leave is sought to:

- Seek an injunction for protection against domestic violence, repeat violence, dating violence, or sexual violence;
- Obtain medical care or mental health counseling, for the employee or a family or household member, to address physical or psychological injuries resulting from the act of domestic violence;

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- Obtain services from a victim-services organization;
- Make the employee's home secure from the perpetrator of the domestic violence or to seek new housing to escape the perpetrator; or
- Seek legal assistance to address issues arising from the act of domestic violence and to attend and prepare for court-related proceedings arising from the act of domestic violence.

Application of the bill is limited to employers with 50 or more employees and to employees who have been employed by the employer for at least 3 months.

Last Action: 03/28/07 S Now in General Government Appropriations

SB 212 The Florida 211 Network (Senators Lynn, Rich, and others)

This bill appropriates \$5 million in nonrecurring general revenue. This bill provides for the expansion of the human services information and referral program known as the Florida 211 Network to all counties in the state. The bill adds services to persons with disabilities and special health care needs to the program's objectives. In addition, this bill designates the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA or agency) as the lead agency for receiving and distributing federal funds in support of the 211 Network. Finally, the bill requires funds expenditure reports from 211 Network providers to the agency and from the agency to the Governor and the presiding officers of the Legislature to fund the statewide expansion of the 211 Network to all Florida counties and to enhance the operations of existing 211 providers.

The bill also appropriates \$193,516 in recurring general revenue and \$7,830 in nonrecurring general revenue to fund three full-time equivalent positions to implement the provisions of the bill.

Last Action: 3/22/07 S Now in Community Affairs -SJ 00235

HB 229 Guardian Ad Litem Direct-Support Organization (Mahon; Nehr)

Current law requires that a guardian ad litem be appointed to represent a child involved in a legal proceeding related to abuse, abandonment or neglect. The Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office was created to provide such representation.

A direct-support organization (DSO) is a Florida corporation created to raise funds and make expenditures to benefit a governmental entity.

The bill authorizes the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office to create a DSO. The DSO may conduct programs and activities, raise funds, and make expenditures that directly or indirectly benefit the Guardian Ad Litem Office.

Last Action: 3/26/07 Now in Policy and Budget Council

CS/SB 418 School Health Services (Health Policy Committee and Senator Wilson)

The bill creates the "One School, One Nurse Act."

The bill establishes procedures and criteria for the awarding of state matching funds for the delivery of school nurse services. The bill provides legislative intent with regard to funding a nurse in every public school in the state and provides \$75,000 in General Revenue funds for a school health summit.

Last Action: 3/22/07 SENATE On Committee agenda-- Education Pre-K - 12, 03/27/07, 3:15 pm, 110-S --Temporarily postponed

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CS/SB 434 Caregivers for Adults (Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee and Senator Jones)

This bill allows the Department of Elderly Affairs (DOEA) to establish a pilot program to train economically disadvantaged workers to act as companions and provide personal assistance to frail and vulnerable adults in the community. The pilot program will start in either Pasco or Pinellas county or both.

There will also be a \$100,000 appropriation from the General Revenue Fund for DOEA to administer this pilot program.

Last Action: 03/26/07 S Now in Health and Human Services Appropriations -SJ 00236

HB 561 Human Papillomavirus (Homan and others)

The discovery of a vaccine to prevent the HPV infection that causes most cases of cervical cancer is one of the greatest advances in women's health in the last century.

The human papillomavirus (HPV) is the most common sexually transmitted virus in the United States. By age 50, at least 80 percent of women will have acquired the HPV infection at some point in their lives of at least one or more of the 30 known strains of HPV. The HPV vaccine was released in June by the FDA for use in girls age 9-26. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommended the vaccine for 11 to 12 year old girls. Gardasil (a vaccine produced by Merck & Co., Inc.) protects against 4 of the most common strains of HPV. The bill requires, beginning with the 2008-2009 school year, that each public and private middle school in Florida provide each student, age 11 or 12, and the parent or guardian, information regarding the connection between HPV and cervical cancer as well as the "availability of a vaccine preventing HPV". The vaccine does not, however, prevent all strains of HPV. The Department of Education, in consultation with Department of Health, must prescribe the content of the HPV information provided to the students and their parents or guardians.

The bill provides that, beginning with the 2008-2009 school year, a student who is 11 or 12 years of age may not be admitted to any school in Florida, public or private, until the student provides evidence of vaccination for HPV, or proof that the parent or guardian, after receiving the required HPV information, has elected for the student to not receive the vaccine. To date, however, the vaccine is only approved for use in girls.

The bill has a fiscal impact; see Section II of this analysis for additional details. The sponsor has filed a strike-all amendment.

Last Action: 3/23/07 Added to Schools & Learning Council agenda

SB 564 Children's Services (Senator Rich)

SB 564 describes the Legislature's finding that all state agencies and programs that touch the lives of children and youth must work in a coordinated and comprehensive manner to provide a continuum of services from prenatal care through successful transition to adulthood. The bill describes the Legislature's finding that the creation of a Children and Youth Cabinet (Cabinet) is the best method to ensure that Florida is the first place families think of when asked, "Where do you want to raise a child?" The bill describes the Legislative intent to work collaboratively with the Governor to improve child and family outcomes in Florida.

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The bill creates the Cabinet in the Executive Office of the Governor (EOG) and directs it to ensure that Florida's public policy promotes interdepartmental collaboration and program implementation so that services for children and youth are planned, managed, and delivered in a holistic and integrated manner.

The bill specifies that the EOG will provide administrative support to the Cabinet. It requires the Cabinet to meet for its organizational session no later than October 1, 2007. After its organizational meeting, the Cabinet is to meet six times each year in different regions of the state. Each meeting must provide an opportunity for public comment.

The bill provides that the Cabinet shall have fifteen members as follows:

- The Governor (who shall serve as chair);
- The Secretary of Children and Family Services;
- The Secretary of Juvenile Justice;
- The Director of the Agency for Persons with Disabilities;
- The Director of the Agency for Workforce Innovation;
- The Secretary of Health;
- The Secretary of Health Care Administration;
- The Commissioner of Education;
- The Director of the Statewide Guardian ad Litem Office;
- The Director of the Office of Child Abuse Prevention; and
- Five members appointed by the Governor who are representatives of children and youth advocacy organizations, but who are not service providers.

The bill provides that the following or their designees shall serve as ex officio members of the Cabinet:

- The President of the Senate;
- The Speaker of the House;
- The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court; and
- The Chief Financial Officer.

The bill provides that nongovernmental Cabinet members shall serve without compensation, but may receive per diem travel expenses pursuant to s. 112.061, F.S.

The bill describes the duties and responsibilities of the Cabinet:

- Develop and implement a shared vision using integrated services to improve child, youth and family outcomes in Florida;
- By December 31, 2007, develop a strategic plan to achieve the goals of the shared vision;
- Develop and implement measurable outcomes, and regularly report on progress made toward the outcomes;
- Design and implement actions to promote collaboration, creativity, increased efficiency, information sharing, and improved service delivery between and within state governmental organizations, and develop long-range plans in accordance with s. 2 16.013, F.S.
- Foster public awareness of issues related to children and youth, and develop new partners;

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- Create a children and youth impact statement evaluating proposed legislation, requested appropriations, and programs;
- Develop a budget through an estimating conference; and
- Engage in other activities.

The bill permits the Governor to appoint an advisory board to assist the Cabinet, and specifies that the board should include representatives of advocacy groups, as well as young people who have received services funded by the state.

The bill requires the Cabinet to provide an annual report by February 1 of each year. The act is to take effect on July 1, 2007.

Last Action: 3/22/2007 S Now in Governmental Operations -SJ 00235

HB 667 Offense of Leaving a Child Unattended or Unsupervised in a Motor Vehicle (Gibbons and others)

Currently, s. 316.6135, F.S., prohibits a parent, legal guardian, or other person responsible for a child from leaving a child under the age of six years unattended or unsupervised in a motor vehicle for a period in excess of 15 minutes. If the motor vehicle is running or the health of the child is in danger, such persons are prohibited from leaving a child unattended or unsupervised for any period of time.

A violation of this section is a non-criminal traffic infraction which is punishable by a fine of up to \$100; or between \$50 and \$500 if the motor vehicle was running or the health of the child was in danger.

HB 667 makes this offense a second degree misdemeanor, punishable by up to 60 days in jail and a fine of up to \$500. The bill also provides that if any person commits this offense and in so doing causes great bodily harm, permanent disability or permanent disfigurement to a child, the offense is a third degree felony, punishable by up to five years in prison and a fine of up to \$5,000.

Last Action: 3/21/07 Now in Safety & Security Council

HB 833 Infant Eye Care (L. Garcia and others)

An eye examination performed using an ophthalmoscope and dilation of the pupils can result in the early diagnosis of serious ocular conditions, including retinoblastoma and congenital cataract, in which early treatment is essential for future ocular and systemic health.

House Bill 833 requires every baby born in a hospital to receive, prior to being discharged from the hospital; an eye examination performed using an ophthalmoscope and dilation of the pupils for detection of pediatric congenital and ocular abnormalities. The bill specifies that failure to comply with this requirement does not make a person guilty of a second-degree misdemeanor, which is the penalty for failure to comply with the requirement to instill a prophylactic in the eyes of a newborn.

The bill requires health insurance policies, health maintenance contracts and Medicaid to provide coverage for an eye examination performed using an ophthalmoscope and dilation of the pupils at birth, at 6 to 8 weeks of age, and at 6 to 9 months of age to detect pediatric congenital and ocular abnormalities and developmental abnormalities.

Last Action: 03/28/07 Now in Healthcare Council

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CS/SB 922 The Personal Care Attendant Program (Health Policy Committee and Senator Wise)

This bill changes the existing personal care attendant program and expands participant eligibility in order to provide personal care attendants to persons who have severe and chronic disabilities of all kinds, not just those with traumatic spinal cord injuries.

The bill requires the Florida Endowment Foundation for Vocational Rehabilitation to contract with the Florida Association of Centers for Independent Living (FACIL or association) to provide training to program participants on hiring and managing a personal care attendant. It also provides that, effective July 1, 2007, the FACIL shall receive 15 percent of the funds to be deposited with the Florida Endowment Foundation for Vocational Rehabilitation pursuant to ss. 320.08068(4)(d) and 413.4021(1), F.S., to administer the program.

The bill deletes requirements that the FACIL, the Department of Health (DOH), and the Florida Endowment Foundation for Vocational Rehabilitation develop a program to recruit, screen, and select persons to be trained as personal care attendants. It also deletes provisions allowing nurse registries to recruit and screen candidates to act as fiscal intermediaries to make payments to personal care attendants under the program.

The bill places the administration of the program solely with the FACIL. It establishes an oversight group, specifies membership, and requires the FACIL to review and revise policies and procedures governing the program. The bill repeals specific provisions requiring the establishment of procedures for selecting eligible participants and the requirement that a plan be developed for the implementation of the program.

Last Action: 3/26/07 S Now in Children, Families, and Elder Affairs

CS/HB 967 Public School Physical Education (Weatherford and others)

Obesity is a growing concern across the country and in this state. Overweight rates have doubled among children and tripled among adolescents in the last 25 years.¹ Obesity has been linked to inactivity, yet schools have reduced or completely excluded physical education from the curriculum in an effort to spend more time in the classroom.

Currently, Florida law encourages all students in prekindergarten through grade 12 to participate in physical education. More particularly, school boards are encouraged to provide 150 minutes of physical education each week to students in kindergarten through grade 5 and to provide 225 minutes of physical education each week to students in grades 6 through 8. Students in grades 9 through 12 are encouraged to participate in physical education, although no amount of time is suggested. However, high school graduation requirements require one credit of physical education.

This bill requires all students in kindergarten through grade 5 to participate in physical education. The bill requires these students to participate in a total of 150 minutes of physical education each week. This bill encourages students in grades 6 through 12 to participate in 225 minutes of physical education each week, thus providing students in grades 9 through 12 a suggested amount of time each week to spend on physical education.

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This bill also requires the State Board of Education to review, and revise as necessary, the Sunshine State Standards to ensure the standards reflect the state-of-the-art physical education philosophy and practice in this state.

Last Action: 3/29/07 1st Reading

HB 1041 Children's Zones (Bendross-Mindingall)

Founded in 1970, Harlem Children's Zone, Inc. (HCZ) is an innovative, non-profit, community-based organization that works to enhance the quality of life for children and families in some of New York City's most desolate neighborhoods. Formerly known as Rheedlen Centers for Children and Families, HCZ's 15 centers serve more than 12,500 children and adults, including over 8,600 at-risk children. The work of the Children's Zone focuses not only on education, social service, and recreation, but also on rebuilding the basic fabric of community life.

The HCZ Project's mission is to create significant, positive opportunities for all children living in a 60-block area of Central Harlem by helping parents, residents, teachers, and other stakeholders create a safe learning and living environment for youth. Behind this mission lie two main principles:

- Children from troubled communities are far more likely to grow into healthy, productive adults if a critical mass of the adults around them are knowledgeable about the techniques of effective parenting, and are engaged in local educational, social, and religious activities with their children; and
- The earlier a child is touched by sound health care, intellectual and social stimulation, and consistent guidance from loving, attentive adults, the more likely that child will be to grow into a responsible and fulfilled member of the community.

The HCZ operates around a new social service paradigm intended to overcome the limitations of traditional approaches by systematically coordinating two related areas of effort: programs focused on addressing the critical needs of children and families, and targeted efforts to rebuild the basic community infrastructure. The work of the HCZ Project has evolved over the past 10 years into a resident-driven, community-building initiative that serves over 8,600 children annually. An integrated network of services and support that provides family stability, opportunities for employment, adequate and affordable housing, a quality education, and youth development activities for adolescents has been developed.

The bill implements idea #69 from the Speaker of the House of Representatives' 100 Innovative Ideas for Florida's Future which is to create a statutory mechanism for communities to create "Children's Zones," using the Harlem Children's Zone as a model. The bill provides legislative findings and intent and creates a 10-year pilot zone in Miami-Dade County. The bill provides for the pilot zone to become incorporated, provides the geographic boundaries of the zone, and provides for the development of a business plan.

Last Action: 3/27/07 Favorable with CS by Healthcare Council

HB 1083 Homelessness (Culp)

The bill amends s. 420.621, Florida Statutes, adding definitions of the terms "Council on Homelessness" and the "State Office on Homelessness", and deleting the outdated definition of "AFDC". The bill amends the current definition of the term "homeless" to mirror the definition of the term "homeless children and youths" contained in the Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The department

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stated that this definitional change would provide a more accurate estimate of the number of homeless and as a result increase the estimates by 15 to 20 percent.

The bill also creates a Housing Retention Program that will provide grant funding to non-profit organizations or agencies, local governments, or other qualified entities, for assistance to households to keep them in stable housing and avert homelessness. The intent of the program is to support the development of a comprehensive local homeless prevention program that will authorize greater flexibility, require case management, and help households over several months rather than on a one-time basis. The program will be locally administered and will require local partnerships to address housing, employment, education, and health care needs. Grant funds provided through the program may be used for rent or mortgage payments, security deposits, utilities, or any major household bill that is contributing to the financial crisis.

Assistance provided may not exceed a maximum cost of \$6,000 per household and the program must not exceed an average cost of \$3,000 per household. Local agencies must match grant-in-aid funds with at least 25 percent cash and 25 percent in-kind services.

The Housing Retention Program's performance goal is that at least 85 percent of those households assisted will remain in their homes for at least two years following the last date on which assistance was received.

Last Action: 3/27/07 Favorable with CS by Healthcare Council

HB 1107 Quality Rating System/Quality Rating System (Ausley)

On May 19, 2006, the Florida Early Learning Advisory Council, chaired by former Lieutenant Governor Toni Jennings, requested the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) to develop a proposal for a Quality Rating System (QRS) in Florida.

On September 28 and 29, 2006, after convening two state-wide meetings to develop it, the agency presented its final proposal to the Florida Early Learning Advisory Council, which the agency titled the "Sunshine State Stars Quality Rating System."

According to the National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC), a "quality rating system" (QRS) is a method to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early childhood education and child care settings.

NCCIC reports that, as of March 2006, 13 states had a QRS: Colorado, District of Columbia, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Vermont.

The bill creates a 2-year voluntary pilot program to implement a QRS in eight Florida counties: Broward, Duval, Hillsborough, Leon, Miami-Dade, Orange, Palm Beach, and Pinellas.

House Bill 1107 requires AWI to establish Florida's Sunshine State Stars Quality Rating System (QRS), which assesses and communicates to parents the quality of early childhood education and child care programs provided by licensed child care facilities and facilities participating in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education (VPK) Program. The bill requires the QRS to be voluntary for facilities.

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The QRS must be based on an assessment of a facility's learning environment; curricula, screening, and assessment; staff qualifications; professional development; business practices; and family involvement. The bill requires AWI to design the QRS with five tiers, each tier being represented by one to five stars. A facility is required to meet the criteria of a lower tier before advancing to the next tier.

The bill specifies that centers and programs rated as Tier 1, 2, or 3 are eligible for grants and awards to improve quality. The bill also provides that centers and programs rated as Tier 4 or 5 are eligible for merit awards to maintain high quality. The bill does not, however, require AWI or the early learning coalitions to provide these grants and awards or specify the amounts of the awards.

The bill requires AWI and the early learning coalitions to provide technical support for facilities in the pilot program.

The bill provides a \$25 million appropriation to AWI to fund the program. The bill does not, however, specify the amount or methodology for allocating the funds among the early learning coalitions

House Bill 1107 requires the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) to establish Florida's Sunshine State Stars Quality Rating System (QRS), which assesses and communicates to parents the quality of early childhood education and child care programs provided by licensed child care facilities and facilities participating in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education (VPK) Program. The bill requires the QRS to be voluntary for facilities.

The QRS must be based on an assessment of a facility's learning environment; curricula, screening, and assessment; staff qualifications; professional development; business practices; and family involvement. The bill requires AWI to design the QRS as a five-star rating system of five tiers, each tier being represented by one to five stars. A facility is required to meet the criteria of a lower tier before advancing to the next tier.

The bill creates a 2-year voluntary pilot program to implement the QRS in eight Florida counties. The bill specifies that centers and programs rated as Tier 1, 2, or 3 are eligible for grants and awards to improve quality. The bill also provides that centers and programs rated as Tier 4 or 5 are eligible for merit awards to maintain high quality.

Last Action: 3/27/07 Favorable with CS by Schools & Learning Council

SB 1156 Prevention First Act (Senator Rich, Bennett, and others)

The bill creates the Prevention First Act. The bill requires the Secretary of Health to develop and maintain, on the Department of Health's website, information on family planning and referrals to local community resources to assist women and families in preventing unintended pregnancies. The website must provide information on: family planning methods; basic reproductive health procedures; and referrals to local community providers of family planning services.

The bill requires the Department of Education to develop a plan to provide comprehensive family life and sexuality education no later than the 2010-2011 school year and to implement

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the plan by the following school year. The bill defines “comprehensive family life and sexuality education.”

Last Action: 03/28/07 S Now in Education Pre-K-12 -SJ 00257

CS/SB 1388 Adoption and Child Protection (Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee and Senator Storms)

In 2004, Florida’s rate of child maltreatment was the highest in the nation, with 32.5 victims per 1,000 children. During 2004, according to the Florida Child Abuse Death Review Team, at least 108 Florida children died from abuse or neglect at the hands of their parents or caretakers. Echoing national trends, 56 percent of the deaths were caused by neglect.

In 2006, the Legislature established a centralized office to examine, oversee, and implement abuse-prevention services by creating the Office of Child Abuse Prevention within the Executive Office of the Governor.

This bill renames the Office of Child Abuse Prevention as the Office of Adoption and Child Protection (Office) and revises the purpose of the Office to include the promotion of adoption and the support of adoptive families.

The bill renames the director of the Office as the Chief Child Advocate and renames the Child Abuse Prevention Advisory Council as the Child Abuse Prevention and Permanency Advisory Council. The bill requires the Office, in conjunction with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Education (DOE), to develop a certification program for professionals who provide services related to adoption.

The bill authorizes the Office of Adoption and Child Protection to establish a direct-support organization to support the state in carrying out its purposes and responsibilities regarding the promotion of adoption, the support of adoptive families, and the prevention of child abuse, by raising money, receiving grants, and making expenditures on behalf of the Office.

Last Action: 03/28/07 S Now in Health and Human Services Appropriations -SJ 00257

SB 1480 Alzheimer's Disease (Senator Wise)

This bill requires the Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) to establish a pilot program to educate the public with respect to screening for memory impairment. DOEA is required to submit an annual report concerning these activities. The bill also requires DOEA to conduct or support an evidence report concerning memory impairment.

The bill authorizes DOEA to award grants in support of programs which provide both information about memory screening and memory screening services.

Last Action 03/28/07 S Now in Health Policy -SJ 00257

SB 1740 The Florida KidCare Program (Senator Fasano)

The bill requires the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) to seek a state plan amendment and waiver authority, if necessary, from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to establish the highest “maximum income threshold” of up to 300 percent of the most recently stated federal poverty limit for eligibility in Florida KidCare programs like Medikids and Florida Healthy Kids.

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The bill specifies that until the federal agency approves the request, the maximum income threshold used for the Florida KidCare program shall be 200 percent of the most recently stated federal poverty limit, or the highest income threshold allowed under current federal law and the state plan amendment, whichever is higher.

Last Action: 3/29/07 S Pending reference review under Rule 4.7(2)

SB 2114 Independent Living Transition Services (Senator Rich)

Senate Bill 2114 provides that a caseworker at an agency that has placed a minor in foster care may sign the minor's application for a driver's license or learner's driver's license without liability or obligation for damages caused by the minor driver. The bill also provides that foster parents or caregivers who develop a written plan of goals for a transitioning child may not have their licensure status jeopardized as a result of the actions of the child pursuant to the plan.

The bill makes young adults who are placed with a court-approved dependency guardian or adopted from foster care after reaching age 16 eligible for independent living transition services, specifically for the Road to Independence Program. The bill mandates that youth between the ages of 16 and 18 be formally evaluated for subsidized independent living services under certain circumstances.

Last Action: 03/28/07 S Now in Judiciary -SJ 00258

SB 2120 Infant Mortality (Senator Joyner, Lawson and others)

Infant mortality among African Americans in 2000 in the U.S. occurred at a rate of 14.1 deaths per 1,000 live births. This is more than twice the national average of 6.9 deaths per 1,000 live births. In Florida, racial disparities have been consistent with national statistics.

This bill creates the black infant health practice initiative. The initiative will sponsor reviews of infant mortalities in select counties in Florida in order to identify factors in health and social services systems contributing to higher mortality rates among African-American infants. The initiative will produce recommendations on how to address the factors identified by the reviews as contributing to these higher infant mortality rates.

Last Action 03/22/07 S Now in Health and Human Services Appropriations -SJ 00257

SB 2868 Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (Children, Families and Elder Affairs)

This bill authorizes the Department of Children and Family Services (DCF or "the department") in consultation with the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), to establish integrated mental health crisis stabilization and addictions receiving facilities for adults. The bill includes a committee of employees, agents, or consultants of the department within the definition of a medical review committee for the purpose of reviewing activities of health care providers and deletes a requirement that providers must have a contract with DCF to receive reimbursement for certain Medicaid services.

Last Action: 03/22/07 S Now in Health Regulation -SJ 00235



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