

State of Arkansas
93rd General Assembly
Regular Session, 2021

As Engrossed: H3/30/21

A Bill

SENATE BILL 204

By: Senators J. Hendren, D. Wallace
By: Representatives McKenzie, C. Fite

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE A STUDY OF THE BEST PRACTICES FOR
REDUCING THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE; AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO CREATE A STUDY OF THE BEST PRACTICES
FOR REDUCING THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN
FOSTER CARE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. TEMPORARY LANGUAGE. DO NOT CODIFY. Study of best practices for reducing the number of children in foster care – Creation – Purpose.

(a) The House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs and the Senate Interim Committee on Children and Youth shall meet jointly to conduct a study of the best practices for reducing the number of children in foster care.

(b)(1) The purpose of the study is to study the best practices for reducing the number of children in foster care in the state.

(2) The study shall include without limitation:

(A) An assessment of the number of children in foster care;

(B) An examination of the state's current practices and policies aimed at reducing the number of children in foster care and the efficacy of those practices and policies;



(C) An examination of the methods other states use to reduce the number of children in foster care and the efficacy of those methods; and

(D) The formulation of a plan for the state to implement the best practices to reduce or eliminate the number of children in foster care, including without limitation increased funding, education, advertisement, and support.

(c) Within sixty (60) days of the effective date of this act, the Department of Human Services shall submit to the House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs and the Senate Interim Committee on Children and Youth a report of:

(1) The number of children in foster care in the state; and

(2) The practices and policies the state is currently using to reduce the number of children in foster care in the state.

(d) Joint meetings for purposes of conducting the study shall be held at least one (1) time every two (2) months but may occur more often at the call of the Chair of the House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs and the Chair of the Senate Interim Committee on Children and Youth.

(e) On or before December 1, 2022, the House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs and the Senate Interim Committee on Children and Youth shall submit to the Legislative Council a final written report of their activities, findings, and recommendations with regard to the study under this act, including without limitation:

(1) Findings on the adequacy of the state's practices and policies aimed at reducing the number of children in foster care; and

(2) Recommended draft legislation to address the findings of the study.

(f) If the House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs and the Senate Interim Committee on Children and Youth determine that it is necessary, the House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs and the Senate Interim Committee on Children and Youth may contract with one (1) or more outside consultants to assist with study required under this section.

(g) The study under this act shall be complete upon submission of the final report to the Legislative Council.

/s/J. Hendren

APPROVED: 4/6/21