

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 1381

97TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE PETERS.

4135L.01I

D. ADAM CRUMBLISS, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To amend chapter 21, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to the joint committee on children's services oversight.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapter 21, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new section, to be known as section 21.775, to read as follows:

21.775. 1. There is established a joint committee of the general assembly to be known as the "Joint Committee on Children's Services Oversight" to be composed of seven members of the senate and seven members of the house of representatives. The senate members of the joint committee shall be appointed by the president pro tem and minority floor leader of the senate and the house members shall be appointed by the speaker and minority floor leader of the house of representatives. The appointment of each member shall continue during the member's term of office as a member of the general assembly or until a successor has been appointed to fill the member's place. No party shall be represented by more than four members from the house of representatives nor more than four members from the senate. A majority of the committee shall constitute a quorum, but the concurrence of a majority of the members shall be required for the determination of any matter within the committee's duties.

2. The joint committee shall:

(1) Review current state policies on children and youth as reflected in Missouri laws, regulations, programs, services, budgetary priorities, and provide oversight;

(2) Study the many problems which jeopardize the development, well-being, and lives of Missouri children and youth, including but not limited to persistent

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

18 interdisciplinary problems such as teen pregnancy, educational underachievement, youth
19 employment, alcohol and drug abuse, delinquency, emotional illness, birth defects, day
20 care, homelessness, child abuse and neglect, child sexual abuse, human trafficking of
21 minors, and growing impoverishment of childhood and adolescence;

22 (3) Define and establish the components, guidelines, and objectives of a
23 comprehensive state policy to ensure and promote present and future health, welfare, and
24 opportunity for all of Missouri's children and youth;

25 (4) Identify any Missouri laws, regulations, programs, services, and budgetary
26 priorities which conflict with the components, guidelines, and objectives of such
27 comprehensive policy;

28 (5) Review any contracted service agreement and the ability and effectiveness of
29 department and agency contractors and their services;

30 (6) Search for any interagency gaps, inconsistencies, and inefficiencies in the
31 implementation or attainment of such comprehensive policy;

32 (7) Identify any new laws, regulations, programs, services, and budgetary priorities
33 which are needed to ensure and promote present and future physical, mental, and
34 emotional health, welfare, and opportunity for all of Missouri's children and youth;

35 (8) Serve as an in-house informational resource for all members and committees
36 of the general assembly on legislative policy matters concerning children and youth; and

37 (9) Make any other recommendation to the general assembly and perform such
38 other activities as the joint committee deems necessary.

39 3. The joint committee is authorized to:

40 (1) Create subcommittees related to its purpose;

41 (2) Request standing committees of the general assembly, the fiscal review
42 committee, and any agencies or entities of state government to study and report on
43 designated policy matters relating to children and youth;

44 (3) Employ committee staff, including an executive director, subject to
45 appropriations for such purpose. The executive director shall have social services
46 experience, child welfare experience, and experience in a position equal to that of an
47 executive director;

48 (4) Enter into contracts for technical or professional services, subject to
49 appropriations for such purpose. The speaker of the house of representatives and
50 president pro tem of the senate shall jointly:

51 (a) Determine the qualifications and task or job descriptions of any consultant or
52 other person contracted for services; and

53 (b) Select any such consultant or other person on behalf of the committee;

54 (5) Promote interagency cooperation and policy continuity with respect to state
55 initiatives to benefit children and youth;

56 (6) Undertake appropriate actions to inform state and local officials, and the public
57 at large of innovative and effective model programs for children, youth, and their families;
58 and

59 (7) Perform other duties as requested by concurrent resolution of the general
60 assembly.

61 4. The joint committee shall meet within thirty days after its creation and organize
62 by selecting a chairperson and a vice chairperson, one of whom shall be a member of the
63 senate and the other a member of the house of representatives. The chairperson shall
64 alternate between members of the house and senate every two years after the committee's
65 organization.

66 5. (1) The committee shall meet at least eight times per year and at the call of the
67 chairperson. The committee may meet at locations other than Jefferson City when the
68 committee deems it necessary.

69 (2) The commissioner of education shall report at least twice each year to a meeting
70 of the joint committee.

71 (3) The director of the department of social services shall report at least five times
72 each year, and as may be called upon by the joint committee or subcommittee thereof,
73 concerning the performance of duties and responsibilities assigned by law to the
74 department regarding children's services. The directors of the department's divisions may
75 also report at meetings of the joint committee or subcommittees thereof.

76 6. The committee shall be staffed by legislative personnel as is deemed necessary
77 to assist the committee in the performance of its duties.

78 7. The members of the committee shall serve without compensation but shall be
79 entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance
80 of their official duties.

81 8. The committee shall compile and submit a report to the general assembly which
82 summarizes the committee's activities, findings, recommendations, and proposals. The
83 report shall be submitted not later than the thirty-first of December of each year in which
84 the general assembly convenes in regular session. Copies of the report containing such
85 recommendations shall be sent to the appropriate directors of state or local government
86 agencies or departments included in the report.

87 9. The provisions of this section shall not be construed or implemented in a manner
88 which prohibits or restricts appropriate review, inquiry, or oversight of any department
89 or agency by any other standing, joint, or interim committee of the general assembly.