

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 2901

103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE DOLAN.

6643H.01I

JOSEPH ENGLER, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To repeal section 21.771, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof one new section relating to the joint committee on child abuse and neglect.

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

Section A. Section 21.771, RSMo, is repealed and one new section enacted in lieu
2 thereof, to be known as section 21.771, to read as follows:

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

13 2. The joint committee shall:

14 (1) Make a continuing study and analysis of the state child abuse and neglect
15 reporting and investigation system;

16 (2) Devise a plan for improving the structured decision making regarding the removal
17 of a child from a home;

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 (3) Determine the additional personnel and resources necessary to adequately protect
19 the children of this state and improve their welfare and the welfare of families;

20 (4) Address the need for additional foster care homes and to improve the quality of
21 care provided to abused and neglected children in the custody of the state;

22 (5) Determine from its study and analysis the need for changes in statutory law;

23 (6) Make any other recommendation to the general assembly necessary to provide
24 adequate protections for the children of our state; and

25 (7) Make recommendations on how to improve abuse and neglect proceedings
26 including examining the role of the judge, children's division, the juvenile officer, the
27 guardian ad litem, and the foster parents.

28 3. The joint committee shall meet within thirty days after its creation and organize by
29 selecting a chairperson and a vice chairperson, one of whom shall be a member of the senate
30 and the other a member of the house of representatives. The chairperson shall alternate
31 between members of the house and senate every two years after the committee's organization.

32 4. The committee shall meet at least quarterly. The committee may meet at locations
33 other than Jefferson City when the committee deems it necessary.

34 5. The committee shall be staffed by legislative personnel as is deemed necessary to
35 assist the committee in the performance of its duties.

36 6. The members of the committee shall serve without compensation but shall be
37 entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of
38 their official duties.

39 7. It shall be the duty of the committee to compile a full report of its activities for
40 submission to the general assembly. The report shall be submitted not later than the fifteenth
41 of January of each year in which the general assembly convenes in regular session and shall
42 include any recommendations which the committee may have for legislative action as well as
43 any recommendations for administrative or procedural changes in the internal management or
44 organization of state or local government agencies and departments. Copies of the report
45 containing such recommendations shall be sent to the appropriate directors of state or local
46 government agencies or departments included in the report.

47 [8. The provisions of this section shall expire on January 15, 2023.]