

HB 2711 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

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Meeting Dates: 1/30

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Department of Human Services (DHS) to attempt to place children or wards with previous substitute care providers when other preferred placement options are not available. Requires DHS to report and provide signed documentation to court regarding efforts made to place children or wards with previous substitute care providers. Applies to placement decisions made following effective date.

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

For cases involving decisions regarding the placement of a child or ward in substitute care, juvenile courts work with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to determine a suitable placement that is in the best interests of the child or ward. When a court finds that substitute care is necessary, DHS is required to give preference to placements with relatives or individuals with whom the child or ward has an existing caregiver relationship. The department is also required to place siblings together to the extent possible. Current law specifies that a foster parent who has cared for the child or ward for a period shorter than 12 consecutive months is not considered a caregiver for this purpose.

House Bill 2711 requires that DHS consider placement with a previous care provider if placement with a relative or caregiver is not possible or not in the best interests of the child or ward. The measure requires that DHS provide signed documentation provided by previous substitute care providers when reporting to a juvenile court on its placement decisions.