

1 State of Arkansas  
2 93rd General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2021  
4

As Engrossed: H3/30/21

# A Bill

SENATE BILL 204

5 By: Senators J. Hendren, D. Wallace  
6 By: Representatives McKenzie, C. Fite  
7

## For An Act To Be Entitled

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

15 TO CREATE A STUDY OF THE BEST PRACTICES  
16 FOR REDUCING THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN  
17 FOSTER CARE.  
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20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
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22 SECTION 1. TEMPORARY LANGUAGE. DO NOT CODIFY. Study of best  
23 practices for reducing the number of children in foster care – Creation –  
24 Purpose.

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

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

31 (2) The study shall include without limitation:

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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*/s/J. Hendren*

**APPROVED: 4/6/21**