

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

A Bill

SENATE BILL 204

4
5 By: Senator J. Hendren

For An Act To Be Entitled

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

Subtitle

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

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

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

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

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

30 (2) The study shall include without limitation:

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

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

36 (C) An examination of the methods other states use to



1 reduce the number of children in foster care and the efficacy of those
2 methods; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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