

INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2007-185

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REQUESTING THAT THE HOUSE AGING, CHILDREN AND YOUTH,
LEGISLATIVE AND MILITARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE AND THE SENATE
INTERIM COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH STUDY THE STATE'S
ABILITY TO PROVIDE FOR THE SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF ALL
CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE
DIVISION OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES OF THE DEPARTMENT
OF HUMAN SERVICES.

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the state to provide a
strong foster care system to fulfill the transitional and permanency
needs of our most vulnerable children; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately four thousand five hundred
(4,500) children currently in the state's foster care system; and

WHEREAS, foster care provides temporary placement for a child in
a safe alternative living arrangement until the child can return home;
and

WHEREAS, the state has an obligation to ensure that child safety
is the paramount concern in all foster care placements; and

WHEREAS, allegations have been reported in the state-wide and
local newspapers of abuse to foster children; and

WHEREAS, the state has a duty to respond swiftly and
appropriately to allegations of any mistreatment of children in foster
care; and

WHEREAS, there is a need for an interim study to evaluate the
overall effectiveness of the ability of the Division of Children and
Family Services of the Department of Human Services to protect children
in the foster care system; and

1 NOW THEREFORE,
2 BE IT PROPOSED BY THE HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON AGING, CHILDREN, AND
3 YOUTH, LEGISLATIVE AND MILITARY AFFAIRS AND THE SENATE INTERIM
4 COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH OF THE EIGHTY-SIXTH ARKANSAS GENERAL
5 ASSEMBLY:

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7 THAT the House Interim Committee on Aging, Children, and Youth,
8 Legislative and Military Affairs and the Senate Interim Committee on
9 Children and Youth:

- 10 (1) Study current laws and regulations governing the
11 safety and protection of children in foster care in the state;
12 (2) Study laws, regulations, and procedures that govern
13 social workers charged with monitoring children in foster care;
14 (3) Study requirements for selecting, evaluating, and
15 retaining foster care parents;
16 (4) Review, hear expert testimony on, and study all
17 available information to evaluate from the Department of Human
18 Services, Division of Children and Family Services, the Crimes Against
19 Children Division of the Arkansas State Police, and other relevant
20 agencies; and
21 (5) Make recommendations for changes in the laws, rules,
22 and procedures governing safety and protection of children in foster
23 care to the Eighty-Seventh Arkansas General Assembly.

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25 Respectfully Submitted,

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29 Representative Donna Hutchinson

30 District 98

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36 FILED: 6-12-07 MXR: ytc