

1 INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2015-159

2
3 REQUESTING THAT THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION STUDY THE
4 CREATION OF OUTREACH PROGRAMS THAT WOULD PROVIDE HOME AND SCHOOL
5 VISITS TO DEAF OR HARD-OF-HEARING CHILDREN BY EDUCATION EXPERTS
6 AND OTHER PROFESSIONALS WHO SPECIALIZE IN THE EDUCATION AND
7 TREATMENT OF DEAF OR HARD-OF-HEARING CHILDREN AND STUDY THE
8 CREATION OF SATELLITE PRESCHOOLS FOR DEAF OR HARD-OF-HEARING
9 CHILDREN FROM BIRTH THROUGH FIVE (5) YEARS OF AGE.

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11 WHEREAS, the Children With Disabilities Act of 1973, Ark.
12 Code Ann. § 6-41-201 et seq., defines a child with a hearing
13 impairment, including without limitation deafness, as a child
14 with a disability; and

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16 WHEREAS, the Children With Disabilities Act of 1973, Ark.
17 Code Ann. § 6-41-201 et seq., declares that it is the policy of
18 the State of Arkansas to provide children with disabilities a
19 free, appropriate education; and

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21 WHEREAS, the education of deaf or hard-of-hearing children
22 in this state needs to be improved to achieve the goal of
23 providing these children with an appropriate education; and

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25 WHEREAS, the number, ages, and location of deaf or hard-of-
26 hearing children in this state is currently unknown; and

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28 WHEREAS, deaf or hard-of-hearing children who are from
29 birth through five (5) years of age and live in remote areas of
30 this state lack proper access to appropriate educational
31 facilities that are close to the children's homes; and

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33 WHEREAS, support in the home of deaf or hard-of-hearing
34 children from experts in the education of deaf or hard-of-hearing
35 children and from other professionals who specialize in issues
36 concerning deaf or hard-of-hearing children is insufficient,

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NOW THEREFORE,
BE IT PROPOSED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION OF THE NINETIETH GENERAL
ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

THAT the House Committee on Education study the creation of outreach
programs for deaf or hard-of-hearing children and the creation of satellite
preschools for those deaf or hard-of-hearing children from birth to five (5)
years of age.

BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT the study review the effectiveness of
creating:

(1) An outreach program for deaf or hard-of-hearing children who
are from birth through five (5) years of age that includes without
limitation:

(A) Weekly home visits by a teacher of deaf or hard-of-
hearing children to assist families in providing a language-rich learning
environment and to monitor the children's progress in language development;

(B) Weekly home visits by a speech language pathologist to
support the children's spoken English language development and provide
listening therapy;

(C) Monthly home visits by a pediatric audiologist to
ensure that the children's hearing aids and cochlear implants are properly
working and adjusted;

(D)(i) Monthly home visits by a deaf or hard-of-hearing
role model to answer the families' questions regarding technological
supports, community resources, and the creation of an accessible
communicative environment.

(ii) "Deaf or hard-of-hearing role model" means an
individual who:

(a) Is a deaf or hard-of-hearing adult;

(b) Is knowledgeable of the needs of deaf or
hard-of-hearing children;

(c) Has the ability to fluently communicate in
American Sign Language; and

1 (d) Is trained in technical supports and
2 community resources for deaf or hard-of-hearing children and in the creation
3 of accessible communicative environments for deaf or hard-of-hearing
4 children; and

5 (E) Monthly meetings of a regional parent-support group
6 that includes a workshop on issues related to hearing impairments; and

7 (2) Satellite preschools that are located in remote areas of the
8 state for deaf or hard-of-hearing children from birth to five (5) years of
9 age.

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11 BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT the study review the effectiveness of
12 creating an outreach program for school-age deaf or hard-of-hearing children
13 that includes without limitation:

14 (1) Sending a teacher of deaf or hard-of-hearing children to the
15 educational placement of a deaf or hard-of-hearing child to:

16 (A) Evaluate the child's educational progress;

17 (B) Assess and track the child's outcomes to determine if
18 intervention is making a positive impact; and

19 (C) Assist in providing appropriate assessments,
20 modifications, and accommodations;

21 (2) Evaluating the quality and use of sign language interpreters
22 in the child's educational placement; and

23 (3) Ensuring that the child's educational placement is
24 appropriate for the child's needs.

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26 BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT the study review the effectiveness of
27 creating a pilot program limited to one (1) or more regions of the state that
28 includes the outreach program for deaf or hard-of-hearing children who are
29 from birth through five (5) years of age and a satellite preschool for deaf
30 or hard-of-hearing children from birth through five (5) years of age.

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32 BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT the study be conducted with the assistance
33 of the Department of Education and the Department of Human Services.

1 BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT by July 1, 2017, the study be completed and
2 a report presented to the House Committee on Education and the Senate
3 Committee on Education with findings and recommendations from the study.

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5 Respectfully submitted,

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9 Representative Warwick Sabin
10 District 33

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