

1233

Sponsor(s): Representatives Pettigrew, Boldt, Moeller, Kagi, Lovick, Orcutt, Dickerson, Chase, Darneille, Eickmeyer, O'Brien, Roach, Armstrong, Flannigan, Jarrett, Clibborn, Lantz, Kenney, Benson, Shabro, Nixon, Morrell, Mielke and Haigh

Brief Description: Improving services for kinship caregivers.

HB 1233 - DIGEST

(SUBSTITUTED FOR - SEE 1ST SUB)

Requires the department of social and health services to implement strategies to increase the number of children placed with willing and able relatives when out-of-home placement is required.

Directs the department of social and health services to establish two pilot projects to assist kinship caregivers with understanding and navigating the system of services for children in out-of-home care by establishing a regional kinship care navigator position. The department shall implement the pilot projects no later than December 1, 2003.

Directs the department of social and health services to report to the appropriate committees of the legislature on the implementation of the two pilot kinship care navigator projects with recommendations on statewide implementation of the pilot projects by December 1, 2004.

Declares an intent to assist children in the care of kin to access appropriate medical and education services. Children being raised by kin have faced barriers to medical care and school attendance because their kinship caregivers have not been able to verify that they are the identified primary caregivers of these children. Such barriers pose an especially significant challenge to kinship caregivers in dealing with school officials and health professionals when children are left in their care with little warning.

Provides that, to assist kinship caregivers in executing adequate and appropriate decisions regarding the educational and medical needs of a child in their care, a kinship caregiver's authorization affidavit is hereby created.

Provides that, within existing resources, the department of social and health services shall establish an oversight committee to monitor, guide, and report on kinship care recommendations and implementation activities.

Requires the kinship care oversight committee to report to the appropriate committees of the legislature on the status of kinship care issues by December 1, 2004.