

AN ACT

relating to creating a committee to review the process for finding permanent placements for children in the conservatorship of the state.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. (a) The Department of Family and Protective Services, in conjunction with the adoption review committee described by Subsection (b) of this section, shall conduct an extensive review of the foster care system to:

(1) identify obstacles that impede the department's ability to find a permanent placement for foster children, including placement by adoption; and

(2) develop ways to improve the foster care system by:

(A) reducing the time a child is in the conservatorship of the department before being permanently placed;

(B) reducing the number of children in the conservatorship of the department who are placed outside of their home county; and

(C) enhancing the procedures for adopting foster children.

(b) The adoption review committee is composed of the following nine members:

(1) four members appointed by the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission as

1 follows:

2 (A) an employee of the Department of Family and
3 Protective Services;

4 (B) a representative from a licensed
5 child-placing agency that provides adoption services;

6 (C) a representative from the Council on
7 Adoptable Children of Texas; and

8 (D) an attorney with expertise in handling
9 adoptions; and

10 (2) five members appointed by the governor who have
11 expertise in or a demonstrated commitment to adoption issues.

12 (c) The adoption review committee shall meet at least
13 quarterly.

14 (d) Not later than December 1, 2010, the Department of
15 Family and Protective Services shall submit a written report of the
16 results of the review conducted under Subsection (a) of this
17 section to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of
18 the house of representatives, the House Committee on Human
19 Services, and the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services.
20 The report must include:

21 (1) a summary of the findings of the review conducted
22 under Subsection (a) of this section;

23 (2) a summary of the obstacles identified in the
24 review that impede the department's ability to find permanent
25 placements for foster children;

26 (3) recommendations of actions the department should
27 take to eliminate the obstacles described by Subdivision (2) of

1 this subsection; and

2 (4) any legislative recommendations that would
3 improve the foster care system.

4 SECTION 2. Not later than December 1, 2009, the executive
5 commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission and the
6 governor shall appoint the members of the adoption review committee
7 and the adoption review committee shall begin performing its duties
8 as provided by this Act.

9 SECTION 3. The adoption review committee is abolished and
10 this Act expires September 1, 2011.

11 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
12 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
13 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
14 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
15 Act takes effect September 1, 2009.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 2225 was passed by the House on April 28, 2009, by the following vote: Yeas 147, Nays 0, 1 present, not voting; and that the House concurred in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 2225 on May 25, 2009, by the following vote: Yeas 145, Nays 0, 2 present, not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 2225 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 21, 2009, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: _____

Date

Governor