



Children & Youth Committee Newsletter



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A Message from the Majority Chair

During the fall season, the House Children & Youth Committee focused our energy on moving legislation from the committee and learning more about the issues that impact children across the Commonwealth. In addition to voting and information meetings, members hosted awareness days at the Capitol, visited service providers in our districts and shared policy points with our stakeholders. We look forward to advancing bipartisan legislation in the spring that ensures the health, safety and welfare of our youngest neighbors.

Donna J. Bullock
Majority Chair
Children & Youth Committee

Happenings in Harrisburg

The House Children & Youth Committee has co-hosted a joint informational meeting with the House Education Committee on Children and Youth Homelessness Awareness.

Children and Youth Homelessness Awareness.

A joint informational meeting was held on Wednesday, November 15, to discuss Children and Youth Homelessness. Members heard from Joe Willard, Vice President, Policy, HopePHL; Maura McInerney, Esq., Legal Director, Education Law Center; Sonia Pitzi, Experiencing Homelessness Region 3 Coordinator Education for Children & Youth Lincoln Intermediate Unit #12; and Katherine S. Diorio, Director of Pupil Services, Red Lion Area School District. McInerney, shared several policy recommendations on behalf of the Education Law Center, including improving identification of children and youth experiencing homelessness, passage of House Bill 663, providing additional targeted supports to students experiencing homelessness, and engaging in cross-agency collaboration to address the needs of unaccompanied homeless youth. This joint informational meeting was helpful in ensuring members' awareness of the issue of children and youth homelessness and legislative proposals that could assist them in supporting young people who are experiencing homelessness.



Voting Meeting

The House Children & Youth Committee hosted a series of voting meetings to consider legislation that was currently in committee.

On Wednesday, June 7, the House Children & Youth Committee met to consider three bills and one resolution. House Bill 665, sponsored by majority chair Bullock, which would clarify that a person may submit eligibility documentation online to a WIC agency before meeting to confirm their enrollment, as well as creates a WIC Modernization Fund. There were two amendments offered to the bill. Chair Bullock sponsored Amendment A00752, which removed the appropriation that created the WIC Modernization Fund. Minority chair Barry Jozwiak sponsored Amendment A00806, which required the Department of Health to establish security measures to protect the personal information of participants in the WIC program and to prevent fraudulent activity in the use of WIC benefits. House Bill 665 as amended passed unanimously with a vote of 19-0.

On Wednesday, October 4, the House Children & Youth Committee met to consider two bills and two resolutions. House Bill 972, sponsored by Rep. Carol Kazeem, which would require that every county have a board of managers, subject to the Department of Human Services regulations, to oversee the operation of secure juvenile detention facilities to ensure proper oversight. There was one amendment offered to the bill. Chair Bullock sponsored Amendment A02114, which limited regulations to counties and counties which have adopted a home rule charter that operate detention facilities authorized by the Department of Human Services; discusses overcrowding and access to educational programs at the detention centers. House Bill 972 as amended passed with a vote of 13-11. House Bill 1593, sponsored by Rep. Otten, which would expand access to Early Intervention Services to children born to mothers who are considered high-risk for, or diagnosed with, postpartum depression and to children who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs),



such as abuse, neglect and household adversity. There was one amendment offered to the bill. Chair Bullock sponsored Amendment A02340, which removed the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) language from the bill. House Bill 1593 as amended passed with a vote of 14-10.

House Resolution 80, sponsored by Rep. Kazeem, which would direct the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study and make recommendations regarding best practices for the operation of juvenile detention centers. There was one amendment offered to the resolution. Chair Bullock sponsored Amendment A02131, which was a technical amendment and provided additional direction to inform the work of the Joint State Government Commission. House Resolution 80 as amended passed with a vote of 14-10. House Resolution 198, sponsored by Rep. Hill-Evans, which recognizes the week of September 18-24, 2023, as, “Diaper Need Awareness Week,” in Pennsylvania. House Resolution 198 passed nearly unanimously with a vote of 23-1.

On Monday, October 16, the House Children & Youth Committee met to discuss one bill and one resolution. House Bill 43, sponsored by Rep. Major, which would remove acceptance into an Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition (ARD) program as a basis for designing a suspected child abuse report as a, “founded report,” and instead designates the report in this case as an, “indicated report.” House Bill 43 passed unanimously with a vote of 25-0. House Resolution 219, sponsored by Rep. Cerrato, which would direct the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study of



emergency childcare and provide recommendations. House Resolution 219 passed nearly unanimously with a vote of 24-1.

On Tuesday, November 14, the House Children & Youth Committee met to consider one bill and two resolutions. House Bill 1746, sponsored by Rep. Daley, which would exempt the term, “childcare center,” from including a program that is operated by a municipality pursuant to either an ordinance or resolution which adopts health and safety standards as outlined in the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society Protocol for Public Preschool Recreation Programs adopted on October 22, 2021.

There was one amendment offered to the bill. Chair Bullock sponsored Amendment A02849, which was a technical amendment to reflect the current protocol amended by the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society on September 15. House Bill 1746 as amended passed with a vote of 24-1. House Resolution 249, sponsored by Rep. Hamm, designates the month of November 2023, as, “Infant Safe Sleep Month,” in Pennsylvania. House Resolution 249 passed with a vote of 23-1. House Resolution 255, sponsored by Chair Bullock, which designates the week of November 13-17, 2023, as, “Pennsylvania Education for Youth Experiencing Homelessness Awareness Week,” and November 15, 2023, as, “Red Shirt Day,” in Pennsylvania. House Resolution 255 passed with a vote of 23-1.



Children & Youth Facts:

The Pennsylvania Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) has been in existence since 1974. The WIC Program provides nutrition services, breastfeeding support, health care referrals, social service referrals and healthy foods. WIC provides services to Pennsylvania residents who are: pregnant women, breastfeeding women, for up to one year postpartum; women up to six months postpartum, who are not breastfeeding; infants and children under 5 years old, including foster care children. 67 Pennsylvania counties provide WIC services at 228 sites.

Source: Pennsylvania WIC Fast Facts.

House Children & Youth Committee

Bills & Resolutions for the 2023-2024 Legislative Session

House Bill 664 (Chair Bullock)

- Establishes a WIC Advisory Board within the PA Department of Health.
 - House Bill 664 was reported as amended from the House Children & Youth Committee on Tuesday, May 2, 2023 (20-1).
 - House Bill 664 was voted out of the House of Representatives on Wednesday, June 12, 2023 (155-48).

House Resolution 91 (Rep. Schlossberg)

- Designates May 7-May 13, 2023, as, “Jewish Day Schools Week,” in Pennsylvania.
 - House Resolution 91 was reported as committed from the House Children & Youth Committee on Tuesday, May 2, 2023 (21-0).
 - House Resolution 91 was voted out of the House of Representatives on Monday, May 22, 2023 (201-0).

House Bill 665 (Chair Bullock)

- Amends Act 121 of 1986, the Women’s, Infants’, and Children’s Nutrition Act by clarifying the eligibility of

WIC participants allowing a person to submit eligibility documentation online to a WIC agency before meeting to confirm their enrollment.

- House Bill 665 was reported as amended from the House Children & Youth Committee on Wednesday, June 7, 2023 (20-1).
- House Bill 665 was voted out of the House of Representatives on Thursday, June 22, 2023 (176-27).

House Bill 1058 (Rep. Krajewski)

- Amends Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes by adding language requiring the court to solicit and consider the opinions of those who engaged with the family finding and kinship care programs before and during child custody proceedings.
 - House Bill 1058 was reported as amended from the House Children & Youth Committee on Wednesday, June 7, 2023 (21-0).
 - House Bill 1058 was voted out of the House of Representatives on Thursday, June 22, 2023 (203-0).



House Bill 1020 (Mehaffie)

- Amends Article IX Department Powers and Duties as to Supervision and Article X Department Powers and Duties as to Licensing of the Human Services Code by adding language to codify the Keystone STARS Program, while allowing for varied work experiences, professional development, effective leadership, and program management as staff qualifications for all certified childcare providers to move up a STAR level in the Keystone STARS Program, and allowing each certified childcare provider in the Keystone STARS Program to display its designated STAR-level rating on its public website, the Department of Human Services' website and on a DHS-issued placard in a public-facing location.
 - House Bill 1020 was reported from the House Children & Youth Committee on Wednesday, June 7, 2023 (19-1).
 - House Bill 1020 was voted out of the House of Representatives on Monday, June 26, 2023 (151-52).

House Resolution 126 (Kinsey)

- Designates the month of May 2023, as, “Foster Care Month,” in Pennsylvania.
 - House Resolution 126 was reported as committed from the House Children & Youth Committee on Wednesday, June 7, 2023 (21-0).

House Bill 972 (Kazeem)

- Amends 130 of 1955, the County Code by requiring that every county have a board of managers, subject to the Department of Human Services (DHS) regulations, to oversee the operation of secure juvenile detention facilities to ensure proper oversight.
 - House Bill 972 was reported as amended from the House Children & Youth Committee on Wednesday, October 4, 2023 (13-11).

House Bill 1593 (Otten)

- Amends the Early Intervention Services Systems Act of 1990 to add children who are born to mothers who are at high risk of postpartum depression and referred by a physician, licensed health care provider or parent and children who are at high risk of experiencing an adverse childhood experience to the statutorily defined list of population groups eligible for Early Intervention Services.
 - House Bill 1593 was reported as amended from the House Children & Youth Committee on Wednesday, October 4, 2023 (14-10).

House Resolution 80 (Kazeem)

- Directs the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study and issue a report on the best practices and recommendations for the operation of juvenile detention centers within this Commonwealth.
 - House Resolution 80 was reported as amended from the House Children & Youth Committee on Wednesday, October 4, 2023 (14-10).

House Resolution 198 (Hill-Evans)

- Designates the week of September 18-24, 2023, as, “Diaper Need Awareness Week,” in Pennsylvania.
 - House Resolution 198 was reported as committed from the House Children & Youth Committee on Wednesday, October 4, 2023 (23-1).

House Bill 43 (Major)

- Amends Section 6303 (related to definitions) of Title 23 (Domestic Relations) to remove cases from the definition of, “founded report,” where there has been an acceptance into an Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition (ARD) program and the reason for the acceptance involves the same factual circumstances involved in the allegation of child abuse.
 - House Bill 43 was reported as committed unanimously from the House Children & Youth Committee on Monday, October 16, 2023 (25-0).



House Resolution 219 (Cerrato)

■ Directs the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study of emergency childcare and issue a report providing best practices to resolve the emergency childcare crisis within this Commonwealth.

– House Resolution 219 was reported as committed unanimously from the House Children & Youth Committee on Monday, October 16, 2023 (24-1).

House Bill 1746 (Daley)

■ Amends Act 21 of 1967, the Human Services Code by adding language to the definition of the term, “child care center,” and adopts the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society Protocol for Public Preschool Recreation Programs adopted on October 22, 2021.

– House Bill 1746 was reported as amended unanimously from the House Children & Youth Committee on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 (24-0).

House Resolution 249 (Hamm)

■ Designates the month of November 2023, as, “Infant Safe Sleep Month,” in Pennsylvania.

– House Resolution 249 was reported as committed from the House Children & Youth Committee on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 (23-1).

House Resolution 255 (Bullock)

■ Designates the week of November 13-17, 2023, as, “Pennsylvania Education for Youth Experiencing Homelessness Awareness Week,” and November 15, 2023, as, “Red Shirt Day,” in Pennsylvania.

– House Resolution 255 was reported as committed from the House Children & Youth Committee on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 (23-1).

