

CONFIDENTIAL
LEGISLATIVE BILL REVIEW FORM: 2016

Bill Number: S.183 Name of Bill: An act relating to permanency for children in the child welfare system

Agency/ Dept: DCF Family Services Author of Bill Review: Cindy Walcott, Deputy Commissioner

Date of Bill Review: 6/1/2016 Related Bills and Key Players Judiciary, Juvenile Defender

Status of Bill: (check one): ☐ Upon Introduction ☐ As passed by 1st body ☒ As passed by both

Recommended Position:

☒ Support ☐ Oppose ☐ Remain Neutral ☐ Support with modifications

Analysis of Bill

1. **Summary of bill and issues it addresses.** This bill expands access to post-adoption contact agreements, creates a mechanism for reinstating parental rights, and narrows the time frame for conditional custody orders.
2. **Is there a need for this bill?** This bill was proposed by the Best Practice Sub-Committee of the Justice for Children Task Force, of which I am a member. The Sub-Committee identified several strategies that would address delays in the flow of CHINS proceedings, and permanency for children subject to those proceedings. Some modifications were made during the legislative process, based on our recommendation.
3. **What are likely to be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for this Department?** DCF could see slight caseload reductions over time if cases move through the juvenile court process more expeditiously.
4. **What might be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for other departments in state government, and what is likely to be their perspective on it?** This will impact the Judiciary and the Office of the Defender General. However, those entities were involved with the development of the bill, and are supportive.
5. **What might be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for others, and what is likely to be their perspective on it?** None known.
6. **Other Stakeholders:**

6.1 Who else is likely to support the proposal and why? Kinship organizations support it, as it provides more options for kin caregivers to attain permanent legal status vis-à-vis a child. Parent advocates also like it as it makes achievement of permanent guardianship (vs. adoption) easier to achieve. Also, an avenue for reinstatement of parental rights (after a termination) is created.

6.2 Who else is likely to oppose the proposal and why? None known

Please return this bill review as a Microsoft Word document to Jahala.Dudley@vermont.gov & Jessica.Mishaan@vermont.gov

7. **Rationale for recommendation:** It is to the advantage of children and families in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems to have a wider range of options to resolve permanency issues in a timely manner.
8. **Specific modifications that would be needed to recommend support of this bill:** NA
9. **Will this bill create a new board or commission AND/OR add or remove appointees to an existing one? If so, which one and how many?** No.

Secretary/Commissioner has reviewed this document: _____ *Date:* _____