

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

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<b>Action:</b>	Do Pass
<b>Vote:</b>	9 - 0 - 0
<b>Yeas:</b>	Boone, Cowan, Dembrow, Freeman, Huffman, Maurer, Olson, VanOrman, Tomei
<b>Nays:</b>	0
<b>Exc.:</b>	0
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Keely West, Administrator
<b>Meeting Dates:</b>	2/4, 2/25

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:** Extends the time to establish a “caregiver relationship” between a juvenile and an unrelated foster parent from six to 12 months.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Due diligence
- Reunification and adoption
- Treatment and recovery programs
- Administrative changes made to facilitate placement process

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:** No amendment.

**BACKGROUND:** The timeline for establishing a “caregiver relationship” has fluctuated from six to 30 months according to the Department of Human Services (DHS). Those in “caregiver relationships”, often un-related foster parents, have statutory authority to intervene in juvenile dependency proceedings. This authority may put foster parents in competition with parents or other family members during these proceedings. An independent workgroup made up of legislators, families, judges and DHS staff determined that it is in the best long-term interest of dependent juveniles to extend the time period required to establish the caregiver relationship with an unrelated foster parent to one year to better fulfill the goal of family placement. According to DHS, this change brings the statute in line with the renewed policy emphasis on family placements.