

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

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<b>Action:</b>	Do Pass
<b>Vote:</b>	4 - 0 - 1
<b>Yeas:</b>	Kruse, Monnes Anderson, Telfer, Morrisette
<b>Nays:</b>	0
<b>Exc.:</b>	Verger
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Jennifer Kellar, Administrator
<b>Meeting Dates:</b>	4/29

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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:**

- Reunification and adoption process
- Administrative changes made to facilitate placement process
- Interim foster care work group role and recommendations
- Relative foster care applicability and compensation versus non-relative foster care
- Due diligence by department in placement decisions

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

**BACKGROUND:** According to the Department of Human Services (DHS), the timeline for establishing a “caregiver relationship” has fluctuated from six to 30 months. Those in “caregiver relationships,” often unrelated 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 work group made up of legislators, families, judges and DHS staff determined that it is in the long-term best 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 statute in line with the renewed policy emphasis on family placements.