

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued

Action:	Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed and Rescind the Subsequent Referral to the Committee on Ways and Means
Vote:	8 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Frederick, Greenlick, Harker, Parrish, Thompson, Weidner, Gilliam, Tomei
Nays:	0
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Jennifer Kellar, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	2/4, 2/21

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Expands the definition of child for the purposes of payments for adoption assistance subsidies by the Department of Human Services (DHS). Requires DHS to pay nonrecurring adoption expenses in adoptions for children with special needs. Clarifies the limits on payments to adoptive parents. Allows adoption assistance subsidies to continue until the age of 21 for young adult adoptees who had finalized adoptions after the age of 16 and before the age of 18 provided they are engaged in specific academic or vocational preparation programs or meet eligibility criteria and have disabilities preventing them from independence at the age of 18. Requires parents receiving adoption payments to inform DHS of circumstances affecting eligibility. Allows DHS to adopt rules or take action prior to operative date, October 1, 2011, in the performance of duties, functions and powers. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Current adoption assistance subsidies paid 100 percent out of General Fund
- Federal law allows adoption assistance subsidies until 21 years of age
- Definition expansion of child allows DHS to receive federal Title IV-E moneys
- Use of subsidies as incentives for adoption of older youth and young adults
- Discussion of committee amendment

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Modifies operative date of Act to October 1, 2011. Allows DHS to adopt rules or take action prior to operative date in the performance of duties, functions and powers. Modifies age span for individual receiving benefits. Adds emergency clause.

BACKGROUND: Modification of state statutory language allows Department of Human Services to take advantage of federal laws that provides additional federal funding options for foster care, guardianship and adoption assistance subsidies' continuation until the age of 21. Federal law requires all three options be implemented simultaneously. According to DHS records during the past five federal fiscal years, 68 children were adopted at age 16 or older.