DIGEST

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HB 909 Reengrossed   2022 Regular Session   Edmonds

Abstract: Establishes within the Dept. of Children and Family Services a continuum of care program for biological parents of unborn children and biological or adoptive parents of child under the age of two.

Proposed law creates within the Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) a continuum of care program for certain pregnant women and parents. Provides that the purpose of the program is to facilitate the operation of a statewide telecare support network that provides community outreach, consultations, and care coordination for women who are challenged with unexpected pregnancies.

Proposed law provides that the continuum of care program shall be designed to accomplish all of the following goals:

(1)   Encourage healthy childbirth.

(2)   Support childbirth as an alternative to abortion.

(3)   Promote family formation.

(4)   Assist parents in establishing successful parenting techniques.

(5)   Increase the economic self-sufficiency of families.

Proposed law requires that DCFS provide in rule for the functions and administration of the telecare support network. Stipulate that these rules ensure that the network does not hold itself out to be an entity that can perform, refer for, or assist with an abortion.

Proposed law prohibits the telecare support network created therein from setting appointments with or referring women or parents to any entity that performs abortions or recommends for abortion.

Proposed law requires that DCFS finance the continuum of care program with TANF funds and any other monies appropriated to it by the legislature for operation of the program.

Proposed law requires that the program created therein deliver services exclusively through electronic means utilizing the telecare support network provided for in proposed law unless the legislature specifically appropriates monies for other modes of service delivery.

Proposed law provides that the continuum of care program shall provide direct services, supports, social services case management, and referrals to biological parents of unborn children and biological or adoptive parents of children under the age of two years. Provides that the components of the program shall include, without limitation, all of the following:

(1)   Outreach to at-risk populations eligible for the program.

(2)   Utilization of registered nurses to assess and evaluate needs related to pregnancy or parenting and to provide medically accurate, pregnancy-related medical information to program participants.

(3)   Utilization of social workers or other licensed individuals with equivalent experience to perform the following functions:

  (a)   Development of a care plan, resources, and supports for program participants to address identified needs.

  (b)   Referrals to appropriate local resources including, without limitation, state and federal benefits programs and local charitable organizations.

  (c)   Assistance in applying for state and federal benefits programs.

  (d)   Assistance in accomplishing elements of the care plan.

(4)   Coordination for pregnant women served by the telecare support network of appointments with in-person pregnancy resources centers or similar agencies in La. which provide information and services including, without limitation, counseling, ultrasound services, pregnancy tests, prenatal assistance, parenting classes, material support, and adoption information.

Proposed law stipulates that in order to be eligible to receive services through the continuum of care program, an individual shall, at the time of initial contact with the program, meet all of the following requirements:

(1)   Is a resident of this state.

(2)   Is a biological parent of an unborn child or a biological or adoptive parent of a child under the age of two years.

Proposed law provides that any program participant who terminates a pregnancy shall be eligible to continue receiving services through the continuum of care program for a period of six months from the date of the pregnancy termination.

Proposed law requires that on or before Dec. 1, 2022, and annually thereafter, DCFS shall submit to the legislative committees on health and welfare a report on the status and operation of the

continuum of care program and provides requirements for the content of such reports.

(Adds R.S. 46:1451-1455)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill:

1.   Delete proposed law requiring that the program created therein shall encompass the existing alternatives to abortion TANF initiative provided for in present administrative rule.

2.   Require that the DCFS administrative rules relative to the telecare support network provided for in proposed law ensure that the network does not hold itself out to be an entity that can perform, refer for, or assist with an abortion.

3.   Stipulate that the telecare support network shall not set appointments with or refer women or parents to any entity that performs abortions or recommends for abortion.

4.   Require that the program created by proposed law deliver services exclusively through electronic means utilizing the telecare support network provided for in proposed law unless the legislature specifically appropriates monies for other modes of service delivery.

5.   Add the following to the set of components of the program created by proposed law: Coordination for pregnant women served by the telecare support network of appointments with in-person pregnancy resources centers or similar agencies which provide information and services including, without limitation, counseling, ultrasound services, pregnancy tests, prenatal assistance, parenting classes, material support, and adoption information.