



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL
AND REHABILITATION SERVICES

Don Jordan, Secretary

Senate Judiciary Committee

March 5, 2009

SB 92

Young Adults Age 18 and Older in SRS Custody

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Chairman Owens and members of the committee, I am Don Jordan, Secretary of the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services. Thank you for the opportunity to appear in support of Senate Bill 92.

The current budget deficit requires that we examine programs and services to determine how to reduce expenses with minimum negative impact on the most vulnerable populations. Currently young adults may remain in the custody of the Secretary and the jurisdiction of the court until age 21. This bill would terminate jurisdiction when any child in need of care reached 18 or, if still in school, on the following June 1 unless there is no court approved transition plan. Further, the bill defines transition plan as an individualized provision of medical, mental health, and housing supports, and, if applicable, supports for dependants in care.

Ending jurisdiction over the young adults who remain in custody after 18 will result in a savings of \$1,532,318 SGF (\$1,687,876 All Funds). This change to the Kansas Code for the Care of Children will have minimal impact as there are extensive independent living services in place for youth and young adults. The budget includes funds to assure adequate plans and supports are in place for each young adult. Data regarding adults in the custody of the Secretary is available on the attached sheet.

Youth age 15 and older in the custody of the Secretary are supported in identifying goals to achieve self sufficiency, developing a plan to achieve those goals and in implementing that plan. Young adults who leave the custody of the Secretary are eligible for independent living services coordinated by an SRS staff person. If the 18 year old is not immediately interested in independent living services, they are free to say no and also free to contact the agency at any time prior to their 21st birthday. Based upon an approved plan for independent living, available services include:

- o Basic supports for daily living skills training and career planning
- o Kansas Regents tuition waiver program
- o Medical Card eligibility to age 21
- o Monthly Subsidy up to \$300.00 per month until age 21.



- Financial Assistance up to \$300.00 for one-time start up costs of rent or housing
- Financial Assistance up to \$500.00 for one-time start up costs of utilities, furniture or housing supplies (non-rent related expenses)
- Financial Assistance up to \$3,500 in the first year for education and training related expenses. Examples of covered expenses are tuition and fees for certification programs and non-Regents institutions, room and board for post-secondary education, technical equipment, tutoring, books and other materials.
- Assistance to assure safe and stable housing.

On February 20, 2009, the Secretary met with a panel of 7 juvenile court judges from across the state and Office of Judicial Administration staff to review this bill and receive input on its impact. The result of dialogue and collaboration in this meeting is reflected in balloon amendments of a court approved transition plan and corresponding definition of that transition plan. The amendments also restore original code language that any child age 18 and over can request in writing that the court cease jurisdiction. The amendments strengthen assurances of stability and support of adults released from the custody of the Secretary. A listing of Judges with whom the Secretary met is available on the attached sheet.

Thank you again for the opportunity to express my support and I stand for questions.