

SENATE BILL NO. 615

BY SENATOR JACKSON

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AN ACT

To amend and reenact R.S. 46:2604(A) through (D) and to enact R.S. 46:2604(G), relative to the Children's Cabinet; to provide with respect to the preparation and submission of the budget; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 46:2604(A) through (D) are hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 46:2604(G) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§2604. Children's budget; preparation and submission

A. In adopting the children's budget annually, the cabinet shall hold such hearings and solicit and review such information and recommendations from affected agencies, **including those represented on the Children's Cabinet**, and programs and other sources as it shall find necessary. To the extent possible, the cabinet shall seek to establish agreement among and support by the affected agencies and programs with respect to the children's budget.

~~B. (1) In reviewing the children's budget recommendations, the cabinet shall ensure that the following costs and cost estimates are included:~~

~~(a) Estimates of all costs associated with the direct delivery of child and family welfare services and juvenile justice services by executive branch agencies, including planning and legal services.~~

~~(b) Estimates of all costs of child and family welfare and juvenile justice services administered by courts and agencies of the judicial branch, including the estimated costs of adjudication, law enforcement by sheriffs, district legal representation, juvenile forensic activity, local juvenile probation, local juvenile detention, FINS, juvenile drug courts, truancy centers, CASA programs, child support adjudication and enforcement, improvements to foster care adjudication, and~~

1 ~~domestic violence programs. The estimates shall include all costs, including state,~~
2 ~~local, self-generated, and federal or other grant funding, regardless of the source of~~
3 ~~the expenditures.~~

4 ~~(c) Estimate of the total expenditures of local government, exclusive of~~
5 ~~federal and state funds provided to the local government from the state, on children's~~
6 ~~services, including the costs of recreation, elementary and secondary education,~~
7 ~~juvenile law enforcement by municipal police departments, juvenile justice services,~~
8 ~~including local probation, local detentions, and treatment services directly~~
9 ~~administered by the local government.~~

10 ~~(2) The budget shall also include goals and benchmarks for measuring year-~~
11 ~~to-year progress and for comparing Louisiana's progress in putting children first with~~
12 ~~the efforts of other states. The cabinet shall define a comprehensive continuum of~~
13 ~~services, including juvenile justice services, and shall estimate the total cost of~~
14 ~~funding the continuum. The state's progress in funding the continuum of services~~
15 ~~shall be measured by comparing the costs of the total need of the continuum versus~~
16 ~~the estimated costs expended by state and local government each year in support of~~
17 ~~the continuum.~~

18 ~~(3)~~ In reviewing the annual children's budget recommendations, the
19 executive departments, agencies, and cabinet shall adhere, to the extent possible and
20 reasonable, to the following policy priorities: **policy priorities as recommended to**
21 **the Children's Cabinet by the Children's Cabinet Advisory Board that are**
22 **considered, amended or adopted by the Cabinet.**

23 ~~(a) The highest funding priority should be given to prevention and early~~
24 ~~intervention services.~~

25 ~~(b) High funding priority should be given to the following programmatic~~
26 ~~areas:~~

27 ~~(i) Exemplary or promising mental health services.~~

28 ~~(ii) Exemplary or promising substance abuse treatment services.~~

29 ~~(iii) Exemplary or promising alternative sanctions.~~

30 ~~(iv) Nonsecure residential programs.~~

1 ~~(v) Exemplary or promising family strengthening programs.~~

2 ~~(e) Funded programs should, for the most part, be school-based or~~
 3 ~~community-based, unless greater efficiency and effectiveness can be achieved~~
 4 ~~through regionally-based programs.~~

5 ~~(d) All existing services, except existing services that are being extended to~~
 6 ~~additional jurisdictions, should be funded at current levels until the effectiveness of~~
 7 ~~the services are properly evaluated. Programs shown through evaluation to not be~~
 8 ~~cost-effective should be altered or eliminated. Programs shown through evaluation~~
 9 ~~to be effective should be funded at higher levels if there is sufficient need for such~~
 10 ~~programs.~~

11 ~~(e) Special funding attention within these priority areas should also be~~
 12 ~~directed to services for female youth offenders, juvenile sexual offenders, and~~
 13 ~~juvenile victims of sexual abuse.~~

14 ~~C. In studying and recommending the children's budget, the cabinet shall~~
 15 ~~determine the feasibility, advisability, and merit of:~~

16 ~~(1) Organizing and presenting the budget in terms of the continuum of~~
 17 ~~services in addition to by department.~~

18 ~~(2) Directing funding to family preservation and nonresidential options~~
 19 ~~directed toward long-range savings.~~

20 **C. The division of administration shall create and update the Early**
 21 **Childhood System Integration Budget herein referred to as ECSIB. This**
 22 **ECSIB shall support and inform the work of the BrightStart initiative,**
 23 **Louisiana's commitment to young children ages 0-5 with the goal to develop**
 24 **service systems integration and partnerships to enhance children's ability to**
 25 **enter school healthy and ready to learn.**

26 **(1) The ECSIB shall provide information needed to make informed**
 27 **decisions about Louisiana's early childhood systems. Specifically, the ECSIB**
 28 **shall assist policymakers to:**

29 **(a) Understand the amount and purpose of current spending on young**
 30 **children and trends over time, including how dollars are allocated to services**

1 and programs for young children and their families and the source of these
 2 funds.

3 (b) Identify gaps and unnecessary or duplicative spending.

4 (c) Nurture collaboration and partnerships among state entities
 5 pursuing similar goals or program objectives.

6 (d) Identify opportunities to increase investments in prevention and
 7 early intervention, as well as to blend and braid funds.

8 (e) Guide private sector spending for child and family services and
 9 supports.

10 (f) Determine the trend in spending for early childhood efforts.

11 (g) Determine how money is being allocated and spent in a manner
 12 consistent with stated early childhood goals.

13 (h) Design results-based accountability projects that align strategic
 14 plans, fiscal analyses, and desired early childhood outcomes.

15 (i) Identify opportunities to secure unmatched federal funding.

16 (2)The ECSIB shall not be organized by department but rather by one
 17 of the four early childhood system components:

18 (a) Access to health care.

19 (b) Social-emotional development and mental health.

20 (c) Early care and education.

21 (d) Family support and parenting education.

22 (3) Program and activity data from the children's budget shall be
 23 entered into one of the early childhood system component areas. Each budget
 24 item shall include the department and agency responsible for the program. The
 25 cabinet shall coordinate with the office of planning and budget in the division
 26 of administration to track changes in the children's budget throughout the fiscal
 27 year.

28 D. The governor's executive budget shall include the governor's
 29 recommended children's budget which shall be a compilation and listing of the
 30 recommended budgets contained in the various schedules of the executive budget for

1 all ~~services and programs for children and their families~~ **departments, agencies,**
2 **programs and activities for children and their families.**

3 * * *

4 **G. The executive director of the Children's Cabinet will present the**
5 **children's budget to the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate**
6 **Finance Committee during their review of the General Appropriation Bill.**

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____