

Child Welfare and Child Protective Services Timeline of Reports and Hearings

Prepared by Senator Claxton for presentation to the GOC - 3/11/2022

11/21/21 - Casey Family Report on system issues that have affected child protective services

1/21/22 – 1st of 3 reports from OPEGA to GOC/HHS:

- Highlighted opportunities for better sharing of information with attention to confidentiality among the review panels

1/25/22 – Reports to HHS:

- Child Welfare Ombudsman
- Maine Child Welfare Action Network
- MSEA re: child welfare workers

1/27/22 – OCFS reports to HHS

- Child welfare
- Children's mental health services
- Foster care

2/11/22 – GOC PH on 1st OPEGA report

2/17/22 – HHS Public Hearing related to the Office of the Child Welfare Ombudsman:

- LD 1755 (Curry) – Independent non-profit; 3 FTEs; own budget
- LD 1812 (Diamond) – Increase to 3 FTE; adds \$250,000
- LD 1824 (Stover) – 2-year pilot of legal access at start of DHHS safety assessment
- LD 1853 (Claxton) – committee bill to be used as needed
- LD 1960 (Gov's bill) – broadens responsibilities, puts them in statute, increases financial support, creates a 5-year contract

2/22/22 – HHS Public Hearing related to Child Welfare more generally:

- LD 1769 (Meyer) – extends foster care supports thru age 20, if desired
- LD 1834 (Diamond) – ongoing monitoring of OCFS by GOC
- LD 1850 (Hymanson) – continue Alternative Response Services program → Amended
- LD 393 (Meyer) – concept draft re HHS Child Welfare Rules → Amended

2/24/22 – HHS Work Session on Child Welfare Ombudsman Bills

- LD 1960 - HHS Passed
 - Strengthen the Office of the Child Welfare Ombudsman
 - 5-year contract with non-profit for independent program in Executive Dept.
 - Staffing as determined by the Office
 - Health insurance for staff
 - Submit own budget
 - Receive notification of any fatality or serious injury within 48
 - Office to review any policy or practice changes prior to their going into effect
 - Defines responsibilities in statute

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- Adds \$200K to that budget line
- Gives the Office a seat on ME Child Welfare Advisory Panel

2/25/22 – GOC review of testimony on Child Welfare from 2/11

3/3/22 – HHS Informational hearing

- Maine Children’s Trust annual report
- Children’s Cabinet annual report
- Maine Child Welfare Advisory Panel annual report

3/7/22 – HHS Work Session on Child Welfare bills

- LD 393 – HHS Passed
 - Dept. coordinator for child welfare services to coordinate across state departments
 - Reunification support for families
 - \$1M each year for Homebuilders Program
 - \$1M each year for Parents as Teachers
 - Kinship navigators - \$420K in each year
 - Child Protective Services Contingency Fund - add \$200,000 in each year
 - Letter requesting Opioid Recovery Fund increase rural access to treatment for SUD
- LD 1824 - HHS Passed
 - 2-year pilot to evaluate impact of access to legal aid early in child protection process
 - Contract with Indigent Legal Services for legal aid to families entering safety assessment
- LD 1850 – HHS Passed
 - Provides Intensive care coordination and wraparound services for intact at-risk families
- LD 1853 - HHS Passed
 - Mandates quarterly reports to HHS by Advisory Panel and Death & Serious Injury panel on efforts to coordinate the work of the 2 panels and recommendations to improve child protection (June and Sept HHS meetings approved by PO’s)
 - Mandates quarterly reports to HHS by OCFS on working to address Casey Family and ME Child Welfare Action Network to at least include:
 - Update on primary, secondary and tertiary prevention efforts
 - Expand the use and value of Family Meetings
 - Include more people with experience in the child welfare system in policy development and operations improvements
 - Review domestic violence responses re: non-offending parent
 - Work with Judiciary and Guardian ad Litem board to improve skills and support for them
 - Recommendations for legislation to improve the system
 - Authorizes HHS to submit legislation

3/25/22 – 2nd of 3 reports from OPEGA to GOC/HHS

9/??/22 – 3rd of 3 reports from OPEGA to GOC/HHS

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Notes on the Ombudsman bills:

LD	Key Characteristics	Staffing	Position	Requires
1755 Curry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Independent non-profit -Adds investigation/oversight -Submits own budget -Oversight of child welfare -Pre-notification of policy and practice changes -Participate in Death and Injury Panel 	3 FTE + 1 staff FT – state level health benefits	Lawyer/MSW Gov appoints HHS review Senate vote	Reports to HHS Provide confidential info in cmte executive session Death/Injury panel report every 2 years
1812 Diamond	Executive department \$250,000/year additional	Adds 2 FTE + 1 staff		
1960 Chairs & Leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Independent non-profit -Executive department -5-year contract -Codifies responsibility -Notified of death if CPS or neglect/abuse -Can review program, policies, rules, laws 	Staff TBD FT – state level health benefits	Lawyer/MSW Contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pre-notification of policy and practice changes - notification of CP deaths
1824 Stover	2-year pilot Access to legal aide at start of DHHS safety assessment District 4			
1853 Claxton	Committee bill			