

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to court actions involving families;
 3 amending ss. 39.001, 61.001, 63.022, 68.07, 741.2902,
 4 984.01, and 985.02, F.S., and creating ss. 88.1041,
 5 742.016, 743.001, and 1003.201, F.S.; providing additional
 6 purposes relating to implementing a unified family court
 7 program in the circuit courts; providing legislative
 8 intent; providing an effective date.

9
 10 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

11
 12 Section 1. Paragraph (o) is added to subsection (1) of
 13 section 39.001, Florida Statutes, to read:

14 39.001 Purposes and intent; personnel standards and
 15 screening.--

16 (1) PURPOSES OF CHAPTER.--The purposes of this chapter
 17 are:

18 (o) To provide all children and families with a fully
 19 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that
 20 involve children and families and a resolution of family
 21 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective
 22 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of
 23 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not
 24 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who
 25 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the
 26 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
 27 unified family court and to support the state courts system's
 28 efforts to improve the resolution of disputes involving children

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29 and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive approach
30 that includes coordinated case management; the concept of "one
31 family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for
32 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
33 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal
34 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the
35 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'
36 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide
37 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better
38 condition than when the families entered the system.

39 Section 2. Subsection (2) of section 61.001, Florida
40 Statutes, is amended to read:

41 61.001 Purpose of chapter.--

42 (2) Its purposes are:

43 (a) To preserve the integrity of marriage and to safeguard
44 meaningful family relationships.~~†~~

45 (b) To promote the amicable settlement of disputes that
46 arise between parties to a marriage.~~†~~~~and~~

47 (c) To mitigate the potential harm to the spouses and
48 their children caused by the process of legal dissolution of
49 marriage.

50 (d) To provide all children and families with a fully
51 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that
52 involve children and families and a resolution of family
53 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective
54 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of
55 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not
56 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who

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57 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the
58 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
59 unified family court and to support the state courts system's
60 efforts to improve the resolution of disputes involving children
61 and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive approach
62 that includes coordinated case management; the concept of "one
63 family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for
64 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
65 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal
66 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the
67 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'
68 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide
69 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better
70 condition than when the families entered the system.

71 Section 3. Subsection (6) is added to section 63.022,
72 Florida Statutes, to read:

73 63.022 Legislative intent.--

74 (6) It is the intent of the Legislature to provide all
75 children and families with a fully integrated, comprehensive
76 approach to handling all cases that involve children and
77 families and a resolution of family disputes in a fair, timely,
78 efficient, and cost-effective manner. It is the intent of the
79 Legislature that the courts of this state embrace methods of
80 resolving disputes that do not cause additional emotional harm
81 to the children and families who are required to interact with
82 the judicial system. It is the intent of the Legislature to
83 support the development of a unified family court and to support
84 the state courts system's efforts to improve the resolution of

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85 disputes involving children and families through a fully
86 integrated, comprehensive approach that includes coordinated
87 case management; the concept of "one family, one judge";
88 collaboration with the community for referral to needed
89 services; and methods of alternative dispute resolution. The
90 Legislature supports the goal that the legal system focus on the
91 needs of children who are involved in the litigation, refer
92 families to resources that will make families' relationships
93 stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide consistent
94 results, and strive to leave families in better condition than
95 when the families entered the system.

96 Section 4. Subsection (9) is added to section 68.07,
97 Florida Statutes, to read:

98 68.07 Change of name.--

99 (9) It is the intent of the Legislature to provide all
100 children and families with a fully integrated, comprehensive
101 approach to handling all cases that involve children and
102 families and a resolution of family disputes in a fair, timely,
103 efficient, and cost-effective manner. It is the intent of the
104 Legislature that the courts of this state embrace methods of
105 resolving disputes that do not cause additional emotional harm
106 to the children and families who are required to interact with
107 the judicial system. It is the intent of the Legislature to
108 support the development of a unified family court and to support
109 the state courts system's efforts to improve the resolution of
110 disputes involving children and families through a fully
111 integrated, comprehensive approach that includes coordinated
112 case management; the concept of "one family, one judge";

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113 collaboration with the community for referral to needed
 114 services; and methods of alternative dispute resolution. The
 115 Legislature supports the goal that the legal system focus on the
 116 needs of children who are involved in the litigation, refer
 117 families to resources that will make families' relationships
 118 stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide consistent
 119 results, and strive to leave families in better condition than
 120 when the families entered the system.

121 Section 5. Section 88.1041, Florida Statutes, is created
 122 to read:

123 88.1041 Legislative intent.--It is the intent of the
 124 Legislature to provide all children and families with a fully
 125 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that
 126 involve children and families and a resolution of family
 127 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective
 128 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of
 129 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not
 130 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who
 131 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the
 132 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
 133 unified family court and to support the state courts system's
 134 efforts to improve the resolution of disputes involving children
 135 and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive approach
 136 that includes coordinated case management; the concept of "one
 137 family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for
 138 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
 139 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal
 140 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the

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141 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'
142 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide
143 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better
144 condition than when the families entered the system.

145 Section 6. Subsection (3) is added to section 741.2902,
146 Florida Statutes, to read:

147 741.2902 Domestic violence; legislative intent with
148 respect to judiciary's role.--

149 (3) It is the intent of the Legislature to provide all
150 children and families with a fully integrated, comprehensive
151 approach to handling all cases that involve children and
152 families and a resolution of family disputes in a fair, timely,
153 efficient, and cost-effective manner. It is the intent of the
154 Legislature that the courts of this state embrace methods of
155 resolving disputes that do not cause additional emotional harm
156 to the children and families who are required to interact with
157 the judicial system. It is the intent of the Legislature to
158 support the development of a unified family court and to support
159 the state courts system's efforts to improve the resolution of
160 disputes involving children and families through a fully
161 integrated, comprehensive approach that includes coordinated
162 case management; the concept of "one family, one judge";
163 collaboration with the community for referral to needed
164 services; and methods of alternative dispute resolution. The
165 Legislature supports the goal that the legal system focus on the
166 needs of children who are involved in the litigation, refer
167 families to resources that will make families' relationships
168 stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide consistent

169 results, and strive to leave families in better condition than
 170 when the families entered the system.

171 Section 7. Section 742.016, Florida Statutes, is created
 172 to read:

173 742.016 Legislative intent.--It is the intent of the
 174 Legislature to provide all children and families with a fully
 175 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that
 176 involve children and families and a resolution of family
 177 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective
 178 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of
 179 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not
 180 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who
 181 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the
 182 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
 183 unified family court and to support the state courts system's
 184 efforts to improve the resolution of disputes involving children
 185 and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive approach
 186 that includes coordinated case management; the concept of "one
 187 family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for
 188 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
 189 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal
 190 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the
 191 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'
 192 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide
 193 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better
 194 condition than when the families entered the system.

195 Section 8. Section 743.001, Florida Statutes, is created
 196 to read:

197 743.001 Legislative intent.--It is the intent of the
 198 Legislature to provide all children and families with a fully
 199 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that
 200 involve children and families and a resolution of family
 201 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective
 202 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of
 203 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not
 204 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who
 205 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the
 206 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
 207 unified family court and to support the state courts system's
 208 efforts to improve the resolution of disputes involving children
 209 and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive approach
 210 that includes coordinated case management; the concept of "one
 211 family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for
 212 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
 213 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal
 214 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the
 215 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'
 216 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide
 217 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better
 218 condition than when the families entered the system.

219 Section 9. Paragraph (g) is added to subsection (1) of
 220 section 984.01, Florida Statutes, to read:

221 984.01 Purposes and intent; personnel standards and
 222 screening.--

223 (1) The purposes of this chapter are:

224 (g) To provide all children and families with a fully
 225 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that
 226 involve children and families and a resolution of family
 227 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective
 228 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of
 229 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not
 230 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who
 231 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the
 232 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
 233 unified family court and to support the state courts system's
 234 efforts to improve the resolution of disputes involving children
 235 and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive approach
 236 that includes coordinated case management; the concept of "one
 237 family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for
 238 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
 239 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal
 240 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the
 241 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'
 242 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide
 243 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better
 244 condition than when the families entered the system.

245 Section 10. Paragraph (j) is added to subsection (1) of
 246 section 985.02, Florida Statutes, to read:

247 985.02 Legislative intent for the juvenile justice
 248 system.--

249 (1) GENERAL PROTECTIONS FOR CHILDREN.--It is a purpose of
 250 the Legislature that the children of this state be provided with
 251 the following protections:

252 (j) A fully integrated, comprehensive approach to handling
253 all cases that involve children and families and a resolution of
254 family disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective
255 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of
256 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not
257 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who
258 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the
259 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
260 unified family court and to support the state courts system's
261 efforts to improve the resolution of disputes involving children
262 and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive approach
263 that includes coordinated case management; the concept of "one
264 family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for
265 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
266 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal
267 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the
268 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'
269 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide
270 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better
271 condition than when the families entered the system.

272 Section 11. Section 1003.201, Florida Statutes, is created
273 to read:

274 1003.201 Legislative intent.--It is the intent of the
275 Legislature to provide all children and families with a fully
276 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that
277 involve children and families and a resolution of family
278 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective
279 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of

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280 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not
281 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who
282 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the
283 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
284 unified family court and to support the state courts system's
285 efforts to improve the resolution of disputes involving children
286 and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive approach
287 that includes coordinated case management; the concept of "one
288 family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for
289 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
290 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal
291 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the
292 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'
293 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide
294 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better
295 condition than when the families entered the system.

296 Section 12. This act shall take effect July 1, 2007.