

By Senator Wilson

33-00092A-08

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1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to independent living; requiring the  
3 Department of Children and Family Services to create a  
4 pilot program in Miami-Dade County to provide continued  
5 foster care until participants reach the age of 21 years;  
6 providing eligibility requirements; requiring that the  
7 circuit court select participants; prescribing services  
8 that will be continued; requiring the periodic assessment  
9 of participants in the program; requiring the department  
10 to submit a report to the court; requiring the selection  
11 of a cohort group for the purpose of comparing results;  
12 requiring reports to the Legislature; providing for  
13 expiration of the program; providing an appropriation;  
14 providing an effective date.

15  
16 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

17  
18 Section 1. Optional pilot program for continued foster care  
19 to age 21.--

20 (1) The Department of Children and Family Services shall  
21 develop an optional continued foster care pilot program in Miami-  
22 Dade County. The circuit court having jurisdiction over young  
23 adults who are prospective participants shall select participants  
24 for the program on its own authority or upon the recommendation  
25 of a young adult who wishes to participate, his or her case  
26 manager, or guardian ad litem. Each participant must be younger  
27 than 18 years of age at the time of entry into the program and  
28 must be or must have been in foster care. The department may  
29 accept up to 50 participants into the pilot program. A

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30 participant shall continue to receive all foster care services,  
31 remain under continued court jurisdiction, and remain in his or  
32 her current foster or group home placement or another licensed  
33 foster home arranged by the lead agency until he or she leaves  
34 the pilot program or reaches 21 years of age, whichever occurs  
35 first.

36 (2) The department or the lead agency must use the  
37 independent living assessment tool referred to in s.  
38 409.1451(4)(b)4., Florida Statutes, to assess each young adult no  
39 later than 1 month after he or she reaches 17 years of age to  
40 determine the young adult's specific needs and recommend  
41 appropriate services. The independent living assessment tool must  
42 be administered annually to determine the program's effectiveness  
43 or lack thereof. The department or lead agency must annually  
44 submit a report to the court as part of the judicial review.

45 (3) The Department of Children and Family Services shall  
46 select a cohort of up to 50 young adults who were formerly in  
47 foster care, who were not eligible for the Road-To-Independence  
48 Scholarship, and who live in a county similar to Miami-Dade  
49 County and shall compare this cohort to the participants in the  
50 pilot program by administering to them the same independent  
51 living assessment tool.

52 (4) The department shall prepare an annual report and  
53 submit it to the Legislature by January 31 of each year and shall  
54 submit a final report by December 1, 2012. The annual reports  
55 must compare the young adults in the pilot program to the cohort  
56 selected under subsection (3). The final report must include an  
57 analysis, including a fiscal analysis, and a recommendation of  
58 the benefits and drawbacks of duplicating the pilot program

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59 throughout the state.

60 (5) This section expires July 1, 2012.

61 Section 2. There is appropriated from the General Revenue  
62 Fund to the Department of Children and Family Services, District  
63 11, for the 2008-2009 fiscal year, the sum of \$500,000 to be used  
64 in implementing the pilot program created under section 1 of this  
65 act. The department may transfer funds appropriated in this  
66 section to the Agency for Health Care Administration to fund the  
67 Medicaid cost of this pilot program.

68 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2008.