

By Senator Rich

34-01634-10

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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
6 additional purposes relating to implementing a unified
7 family court program in the circuit courts; providing
8 legislative 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 are:

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

34-01634-10

20101570__

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

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

40 61.001 Purpose of chapter.—

41 (2) Its purposes are:

42 (a) To preserve the integrity of marriage and to safeguard
43 meaningful family relationships;

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

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

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

34-01634-10

20101570

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

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

72 63.022 Legislative intent.—

73 (6) It is the intent of the Legislature to provide all
74 children and families with a fully integrated, comprehensive
75 approach to handling all cases that involve children and
76 families and a resolution of family disputes in a fair, timely,
77 efficient, and cost-effective manner. It is the intent of the
78 Legislature that the courts of this state embrace methods of
79 resolving disputes that do not cause additional emotional harm
80 to the children and families who are required to interact with
81 the judicial system. It is the intent of the Legislature to
82 support the development of a unified family court and to support
83 the efforts of the state courts system to improve the resolution
84 of disputes involving children and families through a fully
85 integrated, comprehensive approach that includes coordinated
86 case management; the concept of "one family, one judge";
87 collaboration with the community for referral to needed

34-01634-10

20101570__

88 services; and methods of alternative dispute resolution. The
89 Legislature supports the goal that the legal system focus on the
90 needs of children who are involved in the litigation, refer
91 families to resources that will make families' relationships
92 stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide consistent
93 results, and strive to leave families in better condition than
94 when the families entered the system.

95 Section 4. Subsection (10) is added to section 68.07,
96 Florida Statutes, to read:

97 68.07 Change of name.—

98 (10) It is the intent of the Legislature to provide all
99 children and families with a fully integrated, comprehensive
100 approach to handling all cases that involve children and
101 families and a resolution of family disputes in a fair, timely,
102 efficient, and cost-effective manner. It is the intent of the
103 Legislature that the courts of this state embrace methods of
104 resolving disputes that do not cause additional emotional harm
105 to the children and families who are required to interact with
106 the judicial system. It is the intent of the Legislature to
107 support the development of a unified family court and to support
108 the efforts of the state courts system to improve the resolution
109 of disputes involving children and families through a fully
110 integrated, comprehensive approach that includes coordinated
111 case management; the concept of "one family, one judge";
112 collaboration with the community for referral to needed
113 services; and methods of alternative dispute resolution. The
114 Legislature supports the goal that the legal system focus on the
115 needs of children who are involved in the litigation, refer
116 families to resources that will make families' relationships

34-01634-10

20101570__

117 stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide consistent
118 results, and strive to leave families in better condition than
119 when the families entered the system.

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

122 88.1041 Legislative intent.—It is the intent of the
123 Legislature to provide all children and families with a fully
124 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that
125 involve children and families and a resolution of family
126 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective
127 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of
128 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not
129 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who
130 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the
131 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
132 unified family court and to support the efforts of the state
133 courts system to improve the resolution of disputes involving
134 children and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive
135 approach that includes coordinated case management; the concept
136 of "one family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for
137 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
138 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal
139 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the
140 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'
141 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide
142 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better
143 condition than when the families entered the system.

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

34-01634-10

20101570__

146 741.2902 Domestic violence; legislative intent with respect
147 to judiciary's role.-

148 (3) It is the intent of the Legislature to provide all
149 children and families with a fully integrated, comprehensive
150 approach to handling all cases that involve children and
151 families and a resolution of family disputes in a fair, timely,
152 efficient, and cost-effective manner. It is the intent of the
153 Legislature that the courts of this state embrace methods of
154 resolving disputes that do not cause additional emotional harm
155 to the children and families who are required to interact with
156 the judicial system as long as such methods do not conflict with
157 the legislative intent expressed in subsections (1) and (2). It
158 is the intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
159 unified family court and to support the efforts of the state
160 courts system to improve the resolution of disputes involving
161 children and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive
162 approach that includes coordinated case management; the concept
163 of "one family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for
164 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
165 resolution. Case management or alternative dispute resolution
166 processes must comply with existing laws and court rules
167 governing the use of mediation, case management, and alternative
168 dispute resolution in cases involving injunctions for protection
169 brought under this chapter. The Legislature supports the goal
170 that the legal system focus on the needs of children who are
171 involved in the litigation, refer families to resources that
172 will make families' relationships stronger, coordinate families'
173 cases to provide consistent results, and strive to leave
174 families in better condition than when the families entered the

34-01634-10

20101570__

175 system.

176 Section 7. Section 742.016, Florida Statutes, is created to
177 read:

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

200 Section 8. Section 743.001, Florida Statutes, is created to
201 read:

202 743.001 Legislative intent.—It is the intent of the
203 Legislature to provide all children and families with a fully

34-01634-10

20101570__

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

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

226 984.01 Purposes and intent; personnel standards and
227 screening.—

228 (1) The purposes of this chapter are:

229 (g) To provide all children and families with a fully
230 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that
231 involve children and families and a resolution of family
232 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective

34-01634-10

20101570__

233 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of
234 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not
235 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who
236 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the
237 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
238 unified family court and to support the efforts of the state
239 courts system to improve the resolution of disputes involving
240 children and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive
241 approach that includes coordinated case management; the concept
242 of "one family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for
243 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
244 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal
245 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the
246 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'
247 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide
248 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better
249 condition than when the families entered the system.

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

252 985.02 Legislative intent for the juvenile justice system.—

253 (1) GENERAL PROTECTIONS FOR CHILDREN.—It is a purpose of
254 the Legislature that the children of this state be provided with
255 the following protections:

256 (j) A fully integrated, comprehensive approach to handling
257 all cases that involve children and families and a resolution of
258 family disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective
259 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of
260 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not
261 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who

34-01634-10

20101570__

262 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the
263 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
264 unified family court and to support the efforts of the state
265 courts system to improve the resolution of disputes involving
266 children and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive
267 approach that includes coordinated case management; the concept
268 of "one family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for
269 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
270 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal
271 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the
272 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'
273 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide
274 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better
275 condition than when the families entered the system. This
276 section may not be construed to contravene legislative intent
277 provided in this chapter relating to protecting the public from
278 acts of delinquency, ensuring that juveniles found to have
279 committed a delinquent act understand the consequences and
280 serious nature of such behavior, and transferring juveniles from
281 the juvenile justice system to the adult system as provided in
282 this chapter.

283 Section 11. Section 1003.201, Florida Statutes, is created
284 to read:

285 1003.201 Legislative intent.—It is the intent of the
286 Legislature to provide all children and families with a fully
287 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that
288 involve children and families and a resolution of family
289 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective
290 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of

34-01634-10

20101570__

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

307 Section 12. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.