



965684

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

.

House

.

.

Floor: 2/AD/2R

.

01/10/2012 03:30 PM

.

.

---

Senator Rich moved the following:

**Senate Amendment**

Delete lines 232 - 259

and insert:

(1) PURPOSE AND INTENT.—

(a) The Legislature acknowledges that safety, permanency, and well-being are critical goals for all children, especially for those in care, and that well-being depends on receiving a quality education, being provided with comprehensive health care and developing a permanent connection to a supportive adult. The Legislature finds that well-being also depends on each child in care being engaged in a broad range of the usual activities of family, school, and community life during adolescence that will



965684

14 help to empower the child in his or her transition into  
15 adulthood and in living independently.

16 (b)The Legislature recognizes that education and the other  
17 positive experiences of a child are key to a successful future  
18 as an adult and that it is particularly important for a child in  
19 care to be provided with opportunities to succeed. The  
20 Legislature intends that individuals and communities become  
21 involved in the education of a child in care, address issues  
22 that will improve the educational outcomes for the child, and  
23 find ways to ensure that the child values and receives a high-  
24 quality education. Many professionals in the local community  
25 understand these issues, and it is the intent of the Legislature  
26 that biological parents, caregivers, educators, advocates, the  
27 department and its community-based care providers, guardians ad  
28 litem, and judges, in fulfilling their responsibilities to the  
29 child, work together to ensure that an older child in care has  
30 access to the same academic resources, services, and  
31 extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to  
32 all children. The Legislature intends for education services to  
33 be delivered in an age-appropriate and developmentally  
34 appropriate manner, along with modifications or accommodations  
35 as may be necessary to include every child, specifically  
36 including a child with a disability.

37 (c) The legislature also recognizes that there are many  
38 challenges and barriers to providing comprehensive health care  
39 for children in care. These include the extensive and complex  
40 health care needs of children in care and the lack of a  
41 coordinated health care system to meet those needs. The  
42 Legislature finds that challenges within the child welfare



965684

43 system include the frequency of placement changes that many  
44 children experience in while in care, lack of medical history  
45 information, and the poor integration of health care plans and  
46 permanency plans. Challenges within the health care system are  
47 primarily related to insufficient service capacity and a lack of  
48 qualified providers, especially mental health providers and  
49 dentists, who have experience with and are willing to serve  
50 children in care. The Legislature intends that every child in  
51 care be provided with appropriate, adequate and comprehensive  
52 health care.

53 (d) The Legislature finds that while it is important to  
54 provide children with independent living skills, those skills  
55 must be built upon a foundation of permanent connections to  
56 family and other supportive adults. Children must have a  
57 permanent connection with at least one committed adult who  
58 provides a safe, stable, and secure parenting relationship;  
59 love, unconditional commitment, and lifelong support; and a  
60 legal relationship, if possible. The Legislature recognizes the  
61 need to focus more broadly on creating permanent family  
62 relationships and connections for, and with, children in care  
63 and intends that no child leaves care without a lifelong  
64 connection to a supportive adult

65 (e) It is further the intent of the Legislature that while  
66 services to prepare a child for life on his or her own are  
67 important, these services will not diminish efforts to achieve  
68 permanency goals of reunification, adoption, or permanent  
69 guardianship.

70