

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to the Task Force on the Monitoring of  
3           Children in Out-of-Home Care; creating s. 39.4093,  
4           F.S.; creating the Task Force on the Monitoring of  
5           Children in Out-of-Home Care for specified purposes;  
6           requiring the Department of Law Enforcement to provide  
7           certain services; providing for membership by a  
8           specified date; requiring the task force to convene by  
9           a specified date; authorizing the task force to  
10          conduct meetings through teleconference or other  
11          electronic means; providing duties of the task force;  
12          requiring the Florida Institute for Child Welfare to  
13          conduct focus groups and submit its findings to the  
14          task force by a specified date; requiring the  
15          Department of Children and Families to submit certain  
16          monthly reports to the task force through a specified  
17          date; requiring the task force to submit a report to  
18          the Governor and Legislature by a specified date;  
19          providing for repeal of the task force unless reviewed  
20          and saved by the Legislature; providing an effective  
21          date.

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23       Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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25                Section 1.   Section 39.4093, Florida Statutes, is created

26 to read:

27 39.4093 Task Force on the Monitoring of Children in Out-  
28 of-Home Care.-

29 (1) CREATION.-The Task Force on the Monitoring of Children  
30 in Out-of-Home Care, a task force as defined in s. 20.03(8), is  
31 established within the Department of Law Enforcement. The  
32 Department of Law Enforcement shall provide administrative and  
33 staff support services relating to the functions of the task  
34 force.

35 (2) PURPOSE.-The purpose of the task force is to identify  
36 and counter the root causes of why children go missing while in  
37 out-of-home care and to ensure that prompt and effective action  
38 is taken to address such causes. The task force shall examine  
39 and recommend improvements to current policies, procedures,  
40 programs, and initiatives to prevent children from going missing  
41 while in out-of-home care and to ensure that timely and  
42 comprehensive steps are taken to find missing children who are  
43 missing for any reason, including, but not limited to, running  
44 away, human trafficking, and abduction by a parent or a person  
45 who does not have care or custody of the child.

46 (3) MEMBERSHIP; MEETINGS.-

47 (a) The task force shall be composed of the following  
48 members:

49 1. A member of the Senate, appointed by the President of  
50 the Senate.

51        2. A member of the House of Representatives, appointed by  
52 the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

53        3. The secretary, or his or her designee.

54        4. The Secretary of the Department of Juvenile Justice, or  
55 his or her designee.

56        5. The executive director of the Statewide Guardian Ad  
57 Lite Office, or his or her designee.

58        6. The executive director of the Department of Law  
59 Enforcement, or his or her designee.

60        7. A representative from Safe Kids Florida, appointed by  
61 the State Surgeon General.

62        8. A representative from the Statewide Council on Human  
63 Trafficking, appointed by the Attorney General.

64        9. A representative from a community-based care lead  
65 agency that delivers child welfare services in a county defined  
66 as rural by the most recent United States Census, appointed by  
67 the secretary.

68        10. A representative from a community-based care lead  
69 agency that delivers child welfare services in a county defined  
70 as urban by the most recent United States Census, appointed by  
71 the secretary.

72        11. A licensed foster parent, appointed by the secretary.

73        12. A representative from a residential group care  
74 provider, appointed by the secretary.

75        13. A young adult who aged out of the foster care system,

76 appointed by the secretary.

77 (b) Appointments to the task force must be made by August  
78 1, 2023. Each member shall serve at the pleasure of the official  
79 who appointed the member. A vacancy on the task force shall be  
80 filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

81 (c) The task force shall elect a chair from among its  
82 members.

83 (d) The task force shall convene no later than September  
84 1, 2023. The task force shall meet monthly or upon the call of  
85 the chair. The task force may hold its meetings through  
86 teleconference or other electronic means.

87 (4) DUTIES.—The duties of the task force include all of  
88 the following:

89 (a) Analyzing statistical data regarding children in out-  
90 of-home care who are missing and the reasons why the children  
91 are missing, if known.

92 (b) Identifying the root causes of why children go missing  
93 while in out-of-home care and how to prevent children from going  
94 missing while in out-of-home care.

95 (c) Assessing the relationship between children who go  
96 missing from out-of-home care and the risks of such children  
97 becoming victims of human trafficking.

98 (d) Assessing the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of  
99 existing policies and procedures for preventing children in out-  
100 of-home care from going missing, for promptly determining

101 whether such children are missing, and for locating such  
102 children.

103 (e) Evaluating the state's approaches to reporting on the  
104 individual status of children missing from out-of-home care and  
105 the results of the efforts to locate such children, including,  
106 but not limited to, the use of technology, training,  
107 communication, and cooperation.

108 (f) Measuring the overall performance of efforts to locate  
109 and recover children who are missing from out-of-home care,  
110 including, but not limited to, the communication and response  
111 between community-based care lead agencies, the department, and  
112 other entities.

113 (g) Collaborating with the Florida Institute for Child  
114 Welfare to identify best practices used in other states for  
115 monitoring the location of children in out-of-home care who go  
116 missing, and evaluating whether such practices should be adopted  
117 in the state.

118 (h) Submitting recommendations to improve policies,  
119 procedures, and systems in the state, including, but not limited  
120 to, technology, training, communication, and cooperation, so all  
121 entities are effectively monitoring children in out-of-home  
122 care, promptly responding when such children go missing, and  
123 preventing such children from going missing while in out-of-home  
124 care.

125 (5) FOCUS GROUPS.—The Florida Institute for Child Welfare

126 shall conduct focus groups with children in out-of-home care and  
127 young adults who aged out of the foster care system to assist  
128 the task force in fulfilling its duties. The focus groups must,  
129 at a minimum, consider the reasons why such children seek to  
130 leave their out-of-home placement, identify opportunities and  
131 resources to assist and prevent children from leaving their  
132 placements, and to facilitate the return of such missing  
133 children. The institute shall submit the findings from the focus  
134 groups to the task force by April 1, 2024.

135 (6) REPORTS.—

136 (a) Through October 1, 2024, the department shall provide  
137 monthly reports to the task force to assist the task force in  
138 fulfilling its duties. The monthly reports must, at a minimum,  
139 address the number and percentage of children in out-of-home  
140 care who have been reported missing, the reasons why such  
141 children are missing if known, and the length of time between  
142 when such children are reported missing and their recovery or  
143 return. The monthly report must categorize the required data by  
144 age, county, community-based care lead agency, and reason, if  
145 known.

146 (b) By October 1, 2024, the task force shall submit to the  
147 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the  
148 House of Representatives a report that compiles the findings and  
149 recommendations of the task force.

150 (7) REPEAL.—This section is repealed June 30, 2025, unless

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151 | reviewed and saved from repeal by the Legislature.

152 |       Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2023.