

SB 320 by Gaetz; Adoption and Foster Care

232588	A	S	AHS, Richter	btw L.51 - 52:	02/17 09:53 AM
896920	A	S	AHS, Richter	Before L.52:	02/17 09:53 AM
762104	A	S	AHS, Bean	btw L.199 - 200:	02/17 09:52 AM

SB 332 by Grimsley; (Similar to H 0411) Nursing Home Facility Pneumococcal Vaccination Requirements

The Florida Senate
COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA
APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES
Senator Garcia, Chair
Senator Smith, Vice Chair

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, February 18, 2015
TIME: 10:00 a.m.—12:00 noon
PLACE: James E. "Jim" King, Jr. Committee Room, 401 Senate Office Building

MEMBERS: Senator Garcia, Chair; Senator Smith, Vice Chair; Senators Abruzzo, Bean, Benacquisto, Grimsley, Richter, and Sobel

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	COMMITTEE ACTION
1	SB 320 Gaetz	Adoption and Foster Care; Directing the Department of Children and Families to establish an adoption incentive program for certain agencies and subcontractors; requiring that the department conduct a comprehensive baseline assessment of lead agencies and provider performance and compile annual data for the most recent 5 years of available data; providing certain amounts payable to a qualifying adoptive employee who adopts specified children under certain circumstances subject to a specific appropriation to the department, etc.	CF 02/05/2015 Favorable AHS 02/18/2015 FP
2	SB 332 Grimsley (Similar H 411)	Nursing Home Facility Pneumococcal Vaccination Requirements; Requiring a resident of a licensed facility to be assessed for eligibility for pneumococcal vaccination or revaccination by a specified date and, if indicated, to be vaccinated or revaccinated by a specified date, etc.	HP 02/03/2015 Favorable AHS 02/18/2015 AP

Other Related Meeting Documents

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services

BILL: SB 320

INTRODUCER: Senator Gaetz

SUBJECT: Adoption and Foster Care

DATE: February 17, 2015

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Preston</u>	<u>Hendon</u>	<u>CF</u>	Favorable
2.	<u>Brown</u>	<u>Pigott</u>	<u>AHS</u>	Pre-meeting
3.	_____	_____	<u>FP</u>	_____

I. Summary:

SB 320 makes numerous additions to statutes to improve the adoption of children from foster care. The bill creates a program to award incentive payments to community-based care lead agencies and their subcontractors for achieving specified adoption performance standards.

The bill re-creates a program to provide an additional adoption benefit for qualifying employees of state government who adopt a child from the foster care system.

The bill also requires the governor to annually select and recognize one or more individuals, families, or entities that have made significant contributions to the adoption of children from foster care.

The bill is anticipated to have a significant but indeterminate fiscal impact on state government.

The bill has an effective date of July 1, 2015.

II. Present Situation:

Financial Incentives to Increase Adoptions of Children from Foster Care

In 1997, Congress enacted the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) as part of a larger strategy to reduce the number of children in foster care.¹ Adoptions of children from the foster care system have increased over the past decade and a half. Before ASFA, 25,700 children had been adopted from foster care in 1995 nationwide. Those numbers started to increase, eventually

¹ Pub. L. No. 105-89.

reaching over 50,000 by 2000, and the number of adoptions has exceeded more than 50,000 almost every year since, with a high of more than 57,000 in 2009.²

A major provision of ASFA related to adoption created an incentive fund under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act to reward states that increased adoptions of children in the foster care system. If states increased the number of children adopted from foster care over a previous year’s high mark, they were awarded an incentive of \$2,000 to \$4,000 per child.³ Funding for the program has been reauthorized every five years.⁴

In the 2003 and 2008 reauthorizations of the incentive fund, Congress provided an additional incentive to encourage states to increase the adoptions of “older” children. Older children were defined as those nine years of age or older. Children most likely to be adopted are under the age of five. Beginning at the age of nine, children tend to be harder to place in adoptive families. The incentive was set at \$4,000 per adoption increase, \$4,000 per special needs adoption increase, and \$8,000 per older child adoption increase.⁵

An additional provision of the 2008 reauthorization was the inclusion of an incentive for states that increased their rate of adoptions. This new rate incentive was to assist states that had successfully continued to place children in adoptive families while the actual numbers of adoption went down due to decreased numbers of children in foster care.⁶ The 2014 reauthorization included provisions to incentivize timely adoptions and placements into subsidized guardianships.⁷

Since 2008, Florida has received one of the largest amounts of those incentives, second only to Texas.^{8,9}

	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Incentives Earned	\$9.75M	\$6.45M	\$3.84M	\$1.99M	\$3.69M	\$3.49M ¹⁰
Foster Child Adoptions	3,870	3,735	3,391	2,945	3,294	3,415

² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, 2013. *Adoption of Children with Public Child Welfare Agency Involvement By State, FY 2003 through 2013*, available at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/children_adopted.pdf. (last visited Jan. 31, 2015).

³ Pub. L No. 105-89.

⁴ The Adoption Promotion Act of 2003 (PL 108-145), the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Pub. L No. 110-351), and the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act in 2014 (Pub. L No. 113-183).

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ County Welfare Directors Association of California 2014 *Summary of Public Law 113-183*, available at www.cwda.org/downloads/tools/csec/HR-4980-Summary-and-link-to-law.pdf. (last visited Jan. 31, 2015).

⁸ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, 2013. *Adoption of Children with Public Child Welfare Agency Involvement By State, FY 2003 through 2013*, available at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/children_adopted.pdf. (last visited Jan. 31, 2015).

⁹ Florida has not, however, taken advantage of a provision in the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 allowing states to extend MAS to the age of 21.

¹⁰ Florida has to date only received 57 percent of the 2013 award and will receive the remaining balance when additional funding becomes available. Communication from the Department of Children and Families, *Office of Child Welfare* (Feb. 1, 2015) (on file with the Senate Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs).

States are required to spend incentive funds to provide for any activity or services, including post-adoption services, that may be provided under Part B or E of Title IV of the Social Security Act. Florida has always used 100 percent of this funding to offset the cost of maintenance adoption subsidies (MAS).¹¹

In Florida, community-based care lead agencies (CBCs) under contract with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) are responsible for providing pre-adoption services, post-adoption services, and MAS for children adopted from the foster care system. While the DCF monitors performance measures and captures certain data related to adoption, the CBCs and their subcontractors do not currently receive state incentive payments for meeting the performance measures in their contract or other accountability reports.¹²

Adoption Benefits for Parents Adopting Children from Foster Care

Current Benefits

Under s. 409.166, F.S., the DCF is authorized to pay a MAS to parents adopting “special needs” children. The term “special needs child” is defined as a child meeting all of the following conditions:

- A child whose permanent custody has been awarded to the DCF or to a licensed child-placing agency;
- A child who has established significant emotional ties with his or her foster parent(s) or is not likely to be adopted because he or she is:
 - Eight years of age or older;
 - Developmentally disabled;
 - Physically or emotionally handicapped;
 - Of black or racially-mixed parentage; or
 - A member of a sibling group of any age, provided two or more members of a sibling group remain together for purposes of adoption; and
- Except when the child is being adopted by the child’s foster parents or relative caregivers, a child for whom a reasonable but unsuccessful effort has been made to place the child without providing a maintenance subsidy.¹³

The MAS is to be paid to the adoptive parents in the amount of \$5,000 annually, paid on a monthly basis, for the support and maintenance of a child until his or her 18th birthday or in an amount other than \$5,000 annually as determined by the adoptive parents and the DCF. The agreement must take into consideration the circumstances of the adoptive parents and the needs of the child being adopted. The amount of subsidy may be adjusted based on changes in the needs of the child or circumstances of the adoptive parents; however, in no case shall the amount of the monthly payment exceed the foster care maintenance payment that would have been paid during the same period if the child had been in a foster family home.¹⁴

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² Florida Department of Children and Families. *Senate Bill 320 Analysis* (Jan.27, 2015) (on file with the Senate Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs)

¹³ Section 409.166, F.S.

¹⁴ *Id.*

The DCF may also provide adoption assistance to the adoptive parents for assistance initiated after the adoption of the child for medical, surgical, hospital, and related services, needed as a result of a physical or mental condition of the child which existed before the adoption and is not covered by Medicaid, Children's Medical Services, or Children's Mental Health Services. Such assistance may be initiated at any time but must terminate on or before the child's 18th birthday.¹⁵

Adoptive parents are also eligible to be reimbursed, retroactive to January 1, 1987, for up to \$1,000 in nonrecurring expenses related to the adoption of a child which were incurred by the adoptive parents. Nonrecurring expenses are one-time expenses, such as attorney's fees, court costs, birth certificate fees, travel expenses, agency fees, and physical examination fees.¹⁶

Children who were adopted from foster care after May 5, 1997, are also exempt from the payment of tuition and fees, including lab fees, at a school district that provides workforce education programs at a Florida College System institution or at a state university. The exemption remains valid until the student reaches 28 years of age.¹⁷ In addition, a child who was at least 16 years of age and was adopted from foster after spending at least six months in licensed care within the 12 months immediately preceding the adoption, is eligible for post-secondary services and support under the Road-to-Independence Program.¹⁸

Additional Benefit for State Employees Adopting Children from Foster Care

In 2000, the Legislature created a program to provide a cash benefit to employees of state government or of a water management district who adopted a child. Qualifying employees adopting a child defined as a special-needs child under s. 409.166, F.S., were eligible to receive a monetary benefit in the amount of \$10,000 per child; qualifying employees adopting a child other than a special-needs child were eligible to receive a monetary benefit in the amount of \$5,000 per child.¹⁹ This program allowed for the benefit to be paid for both private and foreign adoptions. The law was amended in 2001 to restrict the program to state employees who adopted a child from the foster care system.²⁰

The program was expanded in 2007 to include county school district employees, community college and university employees, and instructional personnel employed by the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind, in the list of employees eligible to receive the benefit. Administration of the program was also transferred in 2007 from the Department of Management Services (DMS) to the DCF.²¹

The Legislature funded the program at approximately \$1.8 million each year through Fiscal Year 2009-2010 before being repealed in 2010.²² This funding was unable to provide an incentive for

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ Section 1009.25, F.S.

¹⁸ Section 409.1451, F.S.

¹⁹ Section 110.152, F.S. (2000). Chapter 2000-241, Laws of Florida.

²⁰ Section 110.52, F.S. (2001). Chapter 2001-256, Laws of Florida.

²¹ Section 409.1663, F.S. (2007). Chapter 2007-119, Laws of Florida.

²² Chapter 2010-158, Laws of Florida.

every state employee who adopted during a budget year. The bill analysis for CS/HB 803 (2007) that expanded the program to include categories of educational employees and moved the program to the DCF, stated:

- Significant benefit funding shortfalls have occurred over the past two years. For example, in 2004, although almost \$1.8 million was appropriated, funding proved to be inadequate to fund all 243 eligible applications, and, therefore, only 179 were funded. In 2005, \$888,000 was appropriated, but only 89 of 167 eligible applications were funded.
- Total appropriations for the program for years 2000-2005 have been \$3,063,687. However, only 50 percent, or 300 of 602, of the eligible adoptions were funded.

Historically, the majority of children who are adopted from the foster care system have been adopted by either their foster parents or relative who are individuals and families with whom the child has made an emotional bond. For example, in 2013 statewide data show:

- 27 percent were adopted by their foster parents;
- 50 percent were adopted by relatives; and
- 22 percent were adopted by recruited parents.²³

It is unknown how many of those foster parents and relatives who adopted 78 percent of the adopted children in 2013 were state employees and would have been eligible for the incentive payment had the program continued.

Annual Adoption Achievement Awards

While there is currently no statutory requirement for the governor to present an adoption achievement award, there is typically support for adoption – particularly of children from the foster care system – from the Executive Office of the Governor (EOG).

November is National Adoption Month, and throughout the month, the Governor’s Office of Adoption and Child Protection, the DCF, CBCs, and community partners recognize National Adoption Month throughout the state with celebrations, awareness runs, parties, and finalizations, among other activities.²⁴

Governor Rick Scott issued a proclamation announcing November 2014 as Florida Adoption Month and National Adoption Day on Saturday, November 22, 2014. Additionally, First Lady Ann Scott made a video encouraging Floridians to consider adopting a child from foster care. The proclamation and video were posted to the Explore Adoption website throughout November and December.²⁵

On November 12, 2014, the Governor and Cabinet met in Tallahassee, and Florida’s Chief Child Advocate reported on Florida’s recent successes with adoption. Local adoptive parents were also invited to share their adoption story. During the meeting, the Cabinet issued a resolution of

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ Florida Governor’s Office of Adoption and Child Protection 2014 Annual Report, available at http://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/childadvocacy/OACP_2014_FINAL.pdf. (last visited Jan. 31, 2015).

²⁵ Available at www.adoptflorida.org. (last visited Jan.28, 2015)

congratulations and best wishes to all families celebrating National Adoption Day on November 22, 2014.²⁶

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1 creates s. 409.1662, F.S., to establish an adoption incentive program to award incentive payments to CBCs and their subcontractors for meeting specific adoption performance standards. The bill also requires the DCF to complete a baseline assessment of CBC performance regarding these measures. At a minimum, the assessment must identify:

- Number of families attempting to adopt from foster care;
- Number of families who have completed the adoption process;
- Number of children eligible for adoption;
- Number of children whose adoption has been finalized;
- Amount of time eligible children wait to be adopted;
- The number of disruptions;
- The number of dissolutions;
- Number of disruptions and dissolutions that could have been prevented by a CBC;
- The time needed to complete each phase of the adoption process;
- Expenditures made toward the recruitment of adoptive families;
- Any program or performance to improve and streamline the adoption process; and
- Results from any feedback from prospective and adoptive parents.

Once the baseline has been established for the adoption measures, the DCF will establish measurable outcome targets, define the methods for measuring these targets, determine the level of performance required to earn an incentive payment, and the amount of payment that can be earned for each target.²⁷

Section 2 creates s.409.1664, F.S., to reestablish an adoption benefit program for state government employees who adopt children from the foster care system. The benefit program proposed in the bill is the same as the program that was repealed in 2010, providing the same amount of benefit payment for the adoption of a child within the child welfare system, with a higher benefit amount for adoptions of children with special needs as defined in s. 409.166, F.S. Under the bill, the program – like the former program – does not provide for means testing. The bill provides that the program’s capacity is limited by the amount of funds appropriated.

Section 3 creates s. 409.1666, F.S., to require the governor to select and recognize one or more individuals, families, or entities that have made significant contributions towards efforts to find permanent homes for children in care through adoption. The DCF is required to create categories and criteria for the awards and seek nominations of potential recipients in each category.

²⁶ Florida Governor’s Office of Adoption and Child Protection 2014 Annual Report, available at http://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/childadvocacy/OACP_2014_FINAL.pdf. (last visited Jan. 31, 2015)

²⁷ Florida Department of Children and Families. *Senate Bill 320 Analysis* (Jan. 27, 2015) (on file with the Senate Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs)

While the bill specifies that the direct support organization established with the Governor's Office of Adoption and Child Protection may accept donations to be given to award recipients and may also provide other tokens of recognition, currently no direct support organization has been established.²⁸

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

SB 320 provides financial incentives to community-based care lead agencies for specified achievement and to state government employees who adopt children who are in the child welfare system.

C. Government Sector Impact:

Incentive Program for CBCs

The bill does not contain a specific appropriation for this program. Currently the DCF does not collect data on all of the measures to be included in the baseline assessment and therefore cannot determine the amount of the incentive payment which may be earned for each CBC's target.

While DCF's Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN) has the capability to obtain several of the measures for the baseline assessment, some measures will require enhancements. The DCF reports that the FSFN work estimate related to these changes is 2,441 hours of effort, or \$268,510. This includes changes necessary to the web pages and all underlying components, including business logic and database changes, changes to the reporting environment to include the new information, and modifications to system documentation.

²⁸ Section 39.001, F.S.

In order for the DCF to monitor the time it takes to complete each phase of an adoption, a formal definition of the adoption phases would need to be established in rule. DCF would then be able to determine which phases currently are being tracked in FSFN and what additional resources are needed.

Benefit Program for State Employees

The bill does not contain a specific appropriation for this program. The DCF reports the need for an additional FTE to implement this program with a fiscal impact of \$71,762 recurring and \$2,882 nonrecurring. The FTE would be used to establish rules, develop operating procedures, and process and approve all incoming applications for the adoption incentive payments and review and approve the applications for the state employee adoption benefit program.²⁹

Governor's Achievement Award

Since there is no direct support organization already established to administer this awards process, it is unclear which entity will assume responsibility for funding.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill creates the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 409.1662, 409.1664, and 409.1666.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

²⁹ *Id.*



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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services
(Richter) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Between lines 51 and 52

insert:

Section 1. Paragraph (b) of subsection (2) of section
39.0016, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

39.0016 Education of abused, neglected, and abandoned
children; agency agreements; children having or suspected of
having a disability.—

(2) AGENCY AGREEMENTS.—



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11 (b) The department shall enter into agreements with
12 district school boards or other local educational entities
13 regarding education and related services for children known to
14 the department who are of school age and children known to the
15 department who are younger than school age but who would
16 otherwise qualify for services from the district school board.
17 Such agreements shall include, but are not limited to:

18 1. A requirement that the department shall:

19 a. Ensure ~~Enroll~~ children known to the department are
20 enrolled in school or in the best educational setting that meets
21 the needs of the child. The agreement shall provide for
22 continuing the enrollment of a child known to the department at
23 the ~~same~~ school of origin when, if possible if it is in the best
24 interest of the child, with the goal of minimal ~~avoiding~~
25 disruption of education.

26 b. Notify the school and school district in which a child
27 known to the department is enrolled of the name and phone number
28 of the child known to the department caregiver and caseworker
29 for child safety purposes.

30 c. Establish a protocol for the department to share
31 information about a child known to the department with the
32 school district, consistent with the Family Educational Rights
33 and Privacy Act, since the sharing of information will assist
34 each agency in obtaining education and related services for the
35 benefit of the child. The protocol must require the district
36 school boards or other local educational entities to access the
37 department's Florida Safe Families Network to obtain information
38 about children known to the department, consistent with the
39 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. s.



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40 1232g.

41 d. Notify the school district of the department's case
42 planning for a child known to the department, both at the time
43 of plan development and plan review. Within the plan development
44 or review process, the school district may provide information
45 regarding the child known to the department if the school
46 district deems it desirable and appropriate.

47 e. Show no prejudice against out-of-home caregivers who
48 desire to educate at home any children placed in their home
49 through the child welfare system.

50 2. A requirement that the district school board shall:

51 a. Provide the department with a general listing of the
52 services and information available from the district school
53 board to facilitate educational access for a child known to the
54 department.

55 b. Identify all educational and other services provided by
56 the school and school district which the school district
57 believes are reasonably necessary to meet the educational needs
58 of a child known to the department.

59 c. Determine whether transportation is available for a
60 child known to the department when such transportation will
61 avoid a change in school assignment due to a change in
62 residential placement. Recognizing that continued enrollment in
63 the same school throughout the time the child known to the
64 department is in out-of-home care is preferable unless
65 enrollment in the same school would be unsafe or otherwise
66 impractical, the department, the district school board, and the
67 Department of Education shall assess the availability of
68 federal, charitable, or grant funding for such transportation.



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69 d. Provide individualized student intervention or an
70 individual educational plan when a determination has been made
71 through legally appropriate criteria that intervention services
72 are required. The intervention or individual educational plan
73 must include strategies to enable the child known to the
74 department to maximize the attainment of educational goals.

75 3. A requirement that the department and the district
76 school board shall cooperate in accessing the services and
77 supports needed for a child known to the department who has or
78 is suspected of having a disability to receive an appropriate
79 education consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities
80 Education Act and state implementing laws, rules, and
81 assurances. Coordination of services for a child known to the
82 department who has or is suspected of having a disability may
83 include:

84 a. Referral for screening.

85 b. Sharing of evaluations between the school district and
86 the department where appropriate.

87 c. Provision of education and related services appropriate
88 for the needs and abilities of the child known to the
89 department.

90 d. Coordination of services and plans between the school
91 and the residential setting to avoid duplication or conflicting
92 service plans.

93 e. Appointment of a surrogate parent, consistent with the
94 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and pursuant to
95 subsection (3), for educational purposes for a child known to
96 the department who qualifies.

97 f. For each child known to the department 14 years of age



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98 and older, transition planning by the department and all
99 providers, including the department's independent living program
100 staff, to meet the requirements of the local school district for
101 educational purposes.

102 Section 2. Subsection (2) of section 409.145, Florida
103 Statutes, is amended to read:

104 409.145 Care of children; quality parenting; "reasonable
105 and prudent parent" standard.—The child welfare system of the
106 department shall operate as a coordinated community-based system
107 of care which empowers all caregivers for children in foster
108 care to provide quality parenting, including approving or
109 disapproving a child's participation in activities based on the
110 caregiver's assessment using the "reasonable and prudent parent"
111 standard.

112 (2) QUALITY PARENTING.—A child in foster care shall be
113 placed only with a caregiver who has the ability to care for the
114 child, is willing to accept responsibility for providing care,
115 and is willing and able to learn about and be respectful of the
116 child's culture, religion and ethnicity, special physical or
117 psychological needs, any circumstances unique to the child, and
118 family relationships. The department, the community-based care
119 lead agency, and other agencies shall provide such caregiver
120 with all available information necessary to assist the caregiver
121 in determining whether he or she is able to appropriately care
122 for a particular child.

123 (a) *Roles and responsibilities of caregivers.*—A caregiver
124 shall:

125 1. Participate in developing the case plan for the child
126 and his or her family and work with others involved in his or



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127 her care to implement this plan. This participation includes the
128 caregiver's involvement in all team meetings or court hearings
129 related to the child's care.

130 2. Complete all training needed to improve skills in
131 parenting a child who has experienced trauma due to neglect,
132 abuse, or separation from home, to meet the child's special
133 needs, and to work effectively with child welfare agencies, the
134 court, the schools, and other community and governmental
135 agencies.

136 3. Respect and support the child's ties to members of his
137 or her biological family and assist the child in maintaining
138 allowable visitation and other forms of communication.

139 4. Effectively advocate for the child in the caregiver's
140 care with the child welfare system, the court, and community
141 agencies, including the school, child care, health and mental
142 health providers, and employers.

143 5. Participate fully in the child's medical, psychological,
144 and dental care as the caregiver would for his or her biological
145 child.

146 6. Support the child's educational ~~school~~ success by
147 participating in ~~school~~ activities and meetings associated with
148 the child's school or other educational setting, including
149 Individual Education Plan meetings and meetings with an
150 educational surrogate if one has been appointed, assisting with
151 ~~school~~ assignments, supporting tutoring programs, ~~meeting with~~
152 ~~teachers and working with an educational surrogate if one has~~
153 ~~been appointed~~, and encouraging the child's participation in
154 extracurricular activities.

155 a. Maintaining educational stability for a child while in



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156 out-of-home care by allowing the child to remain in the school
157 or educational setting he or she attended before entry into out-
158 of-home care is the first priority, unless it is not in the best
159 interest of the child.

160 b. If it is not in the best interest of the child to remain
161 in his or her school or educational setting upon entry into out-
162 of-home care, the caregiver must work with the case manager,
163 guardian ad litem, teachers and guidance counselors, and
164 educational surrogate if one has been appointed, to determine
165 the best educational setting for the child. Those settings may
166 include a public school that is not the school of origin, a
167 private school pursuant to s. 1002.42, virtual education
168 programs pursuant to s. 1002.45, or education at home pursuant
169 to s. 1002.41.

170 7. Work in partnership with other stakeholders to obtain
171 and maintain records that are important to the child's well-
172 being, including child resource records, medical records, school
173 records, photographs, and records of special events and
174 achievements.

175 8. Ensure that the child in the caregiver's care who is
176 between 13 and 17 years of age learns and masters independent
177 living skills.

178 9. Ensure that the child in the caregiver's care is aware
179 of the requirements and benefits of the Road-to-Independence
180 Program.

181 10. Work to enable the child in the caregiver's care to
182 establish and maintain naturally occurring mentoring
183 relationships.

184 (b) *Roles and responsibilities of the department, the*



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185 *community-based care lead agency, and other agency staff.*—The
186 department, the community-based care lead agency, and other
187 agency staff shall:

188 1. Include a caregiver in the development and
189 implementation of the case plan for the child and his or her
190 family. The caregiver shall be authorized to participate in all
191 team meetings or court hearings related to the child's care and
192 future plans. The caregiver's participation shall be facilitated
193 through timely notification, an inclusive process, and
194 alternative methods for participation for a caregiver who cannot
195 be physically present.

196 2. Develop and make available to the caregiver the
197 information, services, training, and support that the caregiver
198 needs to improve his or her skills in parenting children who
199 have experienced trauma due to neglect, abuse, or separation
200 from home, to meet these children's special needs, and to
201 advocate effectively with child welfare agencies, the courts,
202 schools, and other community and governmental agencies.

203 3. Provide the caregiver with all information related to
204 services and other benefits that are available to the child.

205 4. Show no prejudice against a caregiver who desires to
206 educate at home any children placed in his or her home through
207 the child welfare system.

208 (c) *Transitions.*—

209 1. Once a caregiver accepts the responsibility of caring
210 for a child, the child will be removed from the home of that
211 caregiver only if:

212 a. The caregiver is clearly unable to safely or legally
213 care for the child;



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214 b. The child and his or her biological family are
215 reunified;

216 c. The child is being placed in a legally permanent home
217 pursuant to the case plan or a court order; or

218 d. The removal is demonstrably in the child's best
219 interest.

220 2. In the absence of an emergency, if a child leaves the
221 caregiver's home for a reason provided under subparagraph 1.,
222 the transition must be accomplished according to a plan that
223 involves cooperation and sharing of information among all
224 persons involved, respects the child's developmental stage and
225 psychological needs, ensures the child has all of his or her
226 belongings, allows for a gradual transition from the caregiver's
227 home and, if possible, for continued contact with the caregiver
228 after the child leaves.

229 (d) *Information sharing.*—Whenever a foster home or
230 residential group home assumes responsibility for the care of a
231 child, the department and any additional providers shall make
232 available to the caregiver as soon as is practicable all
233 relevant information concerning the child. Records and
234 information that are required to be shared with caregivers
235 include, but are not limited to:

236 1. Medical, dental, psychological, psychiatric, and
237 behavioral history, as well as ongoing evaluation or treatment
238 needs;

239 2. School records;

240 3. Copies of his or her birth certificate and, if
241 appropriate, immigration status documents;

242 4. Consents signed by parents;



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- 243 5. Comprehensive behavioral assessments and other social
244 assessments;
245 6. Court orders;
246 7. Visitation and case plans;
247 8. Guardian ad litem reports;
248 9. Staffing forms; and
249 10. Judicial or citizen review panel reports and
250 attachments filed with the court, except confidential medical,
251 psychiatric, and psychological information regarding any party
252 or participant other than the child.

253 (e) *Caregivers employed by residential group homes.*—All
254 caregivers in residential group homes shall meet the same
255 education, training, and background and other screening
256 requirements as foster parents.

257
258 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

259 And the title is amended as follows:

260 Delete line 2

261 and insert:

262 An act relating to adoption and foster care; amending
263 s. 39.0016, F.S.; revising what the Department of
264 Children and Families must do when required to enter
265 into agreements with specified entities; amending s.
266 409.145, F.S.; revising caregiver roles and
267 responsibilities; revising the roles and
268 responsibilities of the department, the community-
269 based care lead agency, and other agency staff;
270 creating



896920

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services
(Richter) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Before line 52

insert:

Section 1. Subsection (6) is added to section 39.812,
Florida Statutes, to read:

39.812 Postdisposition relief; petition for adoption.—

(6) Once a child's adoption is finalized, the agency or
community-based care agency is required to visit in person or
contact by telephone the child and his or her adoptive family 1



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11 year after the date of finalization as a post-adoption service.
12 If the child and family have relocated to another state, the
13 agency must contact the family by telephone as a post-adoption
14 service.

15 Section 2. Subsection (18) is added to section 409.175,
16 Florida Statutes, to read:

17 409.175 Licensure of family foster homes, residential
18 child-caring agencies, and child-placing agencies; public
19 records exemption.—

20 (18) (a) A licensed child-placing agency conducting
21 intercountry adoptions must be designated by the United States
22 Department of State as an accrediting entity for intercountry
23 adoption services.

24 (b) A licensed child-placing agency providing adoption
25 services for intercountry adoption in Hague Convention
26 countries, in incoming or outgoing cases, must meet the federal
27 regulations pertaining to intercountry adoptions with convention
28 countries.

29 (c) An adoption agency in this state which provides
30 intercountry adoption services for families residing in this
31 state must maintain a record that contains, at a minimum, the
32 following:

- 33 1. All available family and medical history of the birth
34 family;
35 2. All legal documents translated into English;
36 3. All necessary documents obtained by the adoptive parent
37 in order for the child to attain United States citizenship, or
38 if applicable, other legal immigration status; and
39 4. All supervisory reports prepared before an adoption and



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40 after the finalization of an adoption.

41

42 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

43 And the title is amended as follows:

44 Delete line 2

45 and insert:

46 An act relating to adoption and child care; amending
47 s. 39.812, F.S.; requiring the agency or community-
48 based care agency to visit in person or contact by
49 telephone the child and the child's adoptive family 1
50 year after the date the adoption is finalized;
51 amending s. 409.175, F.S.; requiring licensed child-
52 placing agencies providing adoption services for
53 intercountry adoptions to meet specified requirements;
54 requiring an adoption agency in this state which
55 provides certain services to maintain records with
56 specified information; creating



762104

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services (Bean)
recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Between lines 199 and 200

insert:

Section 4. For the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the sum of \$6.5 million in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is appropriated to the Department of Children and Families for the creation of the adoption incentive program. The Executive Office of the Governor shall place these funds in reserve until such time as the Department of Children and Families submits a plan



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11 identifying the performance measures, targeted outcomes, and an
12 expenditure plan for approval to the Executive Office of the
13 Governor and the chair and vice chair of the Legislative Budget
14 Commission in accordance with s. 216.177, Florida Statutes.

15 Section 4. For the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the sum of
16 \$3,425,356 in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is
17 appropriated to the Department of Children and Families for the
18 creation of the adoption benefits for qualifying adoptive
19 employees of state agencies. For the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the
20 sum of \$74,644 in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund
21 is appropriated to the Department of Children and Families and
22 one full-time equivalent position with associated salary rate of
23 46,382 is authorized for the creation of the adoption benefits
24 for qualifying adoptive employees of state agencies and the
25 development of performance measures and targeted outcomes.

26 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

27 And the title is amended as follows:

28 Delete lines 47 - 48

29 and insert:

30 the adoption achievement awards; providing
31 appropriations; providing an effective date.

By Senator Gaetz

1-00809-15

2015320__

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to adoption and foster care; creating
 3 s. 409.1662, F.S.; providing the purpose of the
 4 adoption incentive program; directing the Department
 5 of Children and Families to establish an adoption
 6 incentive program for certain agencies and
 7 subcontractors; requiring that the department conduct
 8 a comprehensive baseline assessment of lead agencies
 9 and provider performance and compile annual data for
 10 the most recent 5 years of available data; providing a
 11 nonexclusive list of factors for the assessment to
 12 identify; requiring that the department negotiate an
 13 outcome-based agreement; requiring that several
 14 factors be included in the agreement; requiring the
 15 department to allocate incentive payments; creating s.
 16 409.1664, F.S.; defining terms; providing certain
 17 amounts payable to a qualifying adoptive employee who
 18 adopts specified children under certain circumstances
 19 subject to a specific appropriation to the department;
 20 providing prorated payments for a part-time employee
 21 and limiting the monetary benefit to one award per
 22 child; requiring that a qualifying adoptive employee
 23 apply to the agency head for the monetary benefit on
 24 forms approved by the department and include a
 25 certified copy of the final order of adoption;
 26 providing that the rights offered by this act do not
 27 preclude a qualifying adoptive employee who adopts a
 28 special needs child to receive any other assistance or
 29 incentive; requiring that parental leave for

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30 qualifying adoptive employees be provided; requiring
 31 the department to adopt rules; requiring the Chief
 32 Financial Officer to submit payment to a qualifying
 33 adoptive employee depending on where he or she works;
 34 requiring state agencies to develop uniform procedures
 35 for informing employees about this benefit and for
 36 assisting the department in making eligibility
 37 determinations and processing applications; creating
 38 s. 409.1666, F.S.; requiring the Governor to annually
 39 select and recognize certain individuals, families, or
 40 organizations for adoption achievement awards;
 41 requiring the department to define categories for the
 42 achievement awards and seek nominations for potential
 43 recipients; authorizing a direct-support organization
 44 established by the Office of Adoption and Child
 45 Protection to accept donations of products or services
 46 from private sources to be given to the recipients of
 47 the adoption achievement awards; providing an
 48 effective date.

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

51
 52 Section 1. Section 409.1662, Florida Statutes, is created
 53 to read:
 54 409.1662 Children within the child welfare system; adoption
 55 incentive program.-
 56 (1) PURPOSE.-The purpose of the adoption incentive program
 57 is to advance the state's achievement of permanency and
 58 stability in living arrangements for children in foster care who

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59 cannot be reunited with their families. The department shall
 60 establish the adoption incentive program to award incentive
 61 payment to community-based care lead agencies, as defined in s.
 62 409.986, and their subcontractors that are involved in the
 63 adoption process for achievement of specific and measureable
 64 adoption performance standards.

65 (2) ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROGRAM.—

66 (a) The department shall conduct a comprehensive baseline
 67 assessment of the performance of lead agencies and providers
 68 related to adoption of children from foster care. The assessment
 69 shall compile annual data for each of the most recent 5 years
 70 for which data is available. At a minimum, the assessment shall
 71 identify:

72 1. The number of families attempting to adopt children from
 73 foster care and the number of families completing the adoption
 74 process.

75 2. The number of children eligible for adoption and the
 76 number of children whose adoptions were finalized.

77 3. The amount of time eligible children waited for
 78 adoption.

79 4. The number of adoptions that resulted in disruption or
 80 dissolution and the subset of those disrupted adoptions that
 81 were preventable by the lead agency or the subcontracted
 82 provider.

83 5. The time taken to complete each phase of the adoption
 84 process.

85 6. The expenditures made to recruit adoptive homes and a
 86 description of any initiative to improve adoption performance or
 87 streamline the adoption process.

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88 7. The results of any specific effort to gather feedback
 89 from prospective adoptive parents and adoptive parents.

90 (b) Using the information from the baseline assessment, the
 91 department shall negotiate an outcome-based agreement with lead
 92 agencies and their subcontracted providers that are involved in
 93 the adoption process. The agreement shall establish measureable
 94 outcome targets, define the method for measuring performance and
 95 for determining the level of performance required to earn the
 96 incentive payment, and the amount of the incentive payment which
 97 may be earned for each target. The department shall update the
 98 assessment annually.

99 (3) INCENTIVE PAYMENTS.—

100 (a) The department shall allocate incentive payments to
 101 performance improvement targets in a manner that ensures that
 102 total payments do not exceed the amount appropriated for this
 103 purpose.

104 (b) The department shall ensure that the amount of the
 105 incentive payments are proportionate to the value of the
 106 performance improvement.

107 Section 2. Section 409.1664, Florida Statutes, is created
 108 to read:

109 409.1664 Adoption benefits for qualifying adoptive
 110 employees of state agencies.—

111 (1) As used in this section, the term:

112 (a) "Child within the child welfare system" has the same
 113 meaning as in s. 409.166.

114 (b) "Qualifying adoptive employee" means a full-time or
 115 part-time employee of a state agency who is paid from regular
 116 salary appropriations, or otherwise meets the state agency

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117 employer's definition of a regular rather than temporary
 118 employee, and who adopts a child within the child welfare system
 119 pursuant to chapter 63. The term includes instructional
 120 personnel, as defined in s. 1012.01, employed by the Florida
 121 School for the Deaf and the Blind.

122 (c) "State agency" means a branch, department, or agency of
 123 state government for which the Chief Financial Officer processes
 124 payroll requisitions, a state university or Florida College
 125 System institution as defined in s. 1000.21, a school district
 126 unit as defined in s. 1001.30, or a water management district as
 127 defined in s. 373.019.

128 (2) A qualifying adoptive employee that adopts a child
 129 within the child welfare system who has additional special needs
 130 as described in s. 409.166 is eligible to receive a lump-sum
 131 monetary benefit in the amount of \$10,000 per child within the
 132 child welfare system, subject to applicable taxes. A qualifying
 133 adoptive employee that adopts a child within the child welfare
 134 system who has no additional special needs as described in s.
 135 409.166 is eligible to receive a lump-sum monetary benefit in
 136 the amount of \$5,000 per child within the child welfare system,
 137 subject to applicable taxes.

138 (a) Benefits paid to a qualifying adoptive employee who is
 139 a part-time employee must be prorated based on the qualifying
 140 adoptive employee's full-time equivalency at the time of
 141 applying for the benefits.

142 (b) Monetary benefits are limited to one award per adopted
 143 child within the child welfare system.

144 (c) The payment of a lump-sum monetary benefit for adopting
 145 a child within the child welfare system under this section is

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146 subject to a specific appropriation to the department for such
 147 purpose.

148 (3) A qualifying adoptive employee must apply to his or her
 149 agency head to obtain the monetary benefit provided in
 150 subsection (2). Applications must be on forms approved by the
 151 department and must include a certified copy of the final order
 152 of adoption naming the applicant as the adoptive parent.

153 (4) This section does not affect the right of any
 154 qualifying adoptive employee who adopts a special needs child
 155 that is not a child within the child welfare system to receive
 156 adoption assistance under s. 409.166 or any other statute that
 157 provides financial incentives for the adoption of children.

158 (5) Parental leave for a qualifying adoptive employee must
 159 be provided in accordance with the personnel policies and
 160 procedures of the employee's state agency employer.

161 (6) The department shall adopt rules to administer this
 162 section. The rules may provide for an application process such
 163 as, but not limited to, an open enrollment period during which
 164 qualifying adoptive employees may apply for monetary benefits
 165 under this section.

166 (7) The Chief Financial Officer shall disburse a monetary
 167 benefit to a qualifying adoptive employee upon the department's
 168 submission of a payroll requisition. The Chief Financial Officer
 169 shall transfer funds from the department to a state university,
 170 Florida College System institution, school district unit, or
 171 water management district, as appropriate, to enable payment to
 172 the qualifying adoptive employee through the payroll systems as
 173 long as funds are available for such purpose.

174 (8) Each state agency shall develop a uniform procedure for

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175 informing employees about this benefit and for assisting the
176 department in making eligibility determinations and processing
177 applications. Any procedure adopted by a state agency is valid
178 and enforceable if the procedure does not conflict with the
179 express terms of this section.

180 Section 3. Section 409.1666, Florida Statutes, is created
181 to read:

182 409.1666 Annual adoption achievement awards.—Each year, the
183 Governor shall select and recognize one or more individuals,
184 families, or organizations that make significant contributions
185 to enabling this state’s foster children to achieve permanency
186 through adoption. The department shall define appropriate
187 categories for the achievement awards and seek nominations for
188 potential recipients in each category from individuals and
189 organizations knowledgeable about foster care and adoption.

190 (1) The award shall recognize persons whose contributions
191 involve extraordinary effort or personal sacrifice in order to
192 provide caring and permanent homes for foster children.

193 (2) A direct-support organization established in accordance
194 with s. 39.0011 by the Office of Adoption and Child Protection
195 within the Executive Office of the Governor may accept donations
196 of products or services from private sources to be given to the
197 recipients of the adoption achievement awards. The direct-
198 support organization may also provide suitable plaques, framed
199 certificates, pins, and other tokens of recognition.

200 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015.

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services

BILL: SB 332

INTRODUCER: Senator Grimsley

SUBJECT: Nursing Home Facility Pneumococcal Vaccination Requirements

DATE: February 17, 2015

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Looke</u>	<u>Stovall</u>	<u>HP</u>	Favorable
2.	<u>Brown</u>	<u>Pigott</u>	<u>AHS</u>	Pre-meeting
3.	_____	_____	<u>AP</u>	_____

I. Summary:

SB 332 removes the requirement that nursing homes vaccinate eligible new admissions with the pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccination (PPV) and instead allows eligible new admissions to be vaccinated with any pneumococcal vaccination that is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The bill has no fiscal impact.

II. Present Situation:

Pneumococcal Disease and Vaccines

Pneumococcal disease is a bacterium know as Streptococcus pneumonia which can cause severe infections of the lungs (pneumonia), bloodstream (bacteremia), and lining of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis).¹ Pneumococcal disease is spread from person to person by direct contact with respiratory secretions, such as saliva and mucus. Each year in the United States, pneumococcal disease kills 18,000 adults age 65 and older and thousands more are admitted to hospitals to receive treatment due to contracting the disease.²

The CDC recommends two vaccines to prevent pneumococcal disease – PPV and pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV13).³ PCV13 protects against 13 strains of pneumonia and PPV protects against 23 strains.⁴ Both vaccines protect against illness such as meningitis and bacteremia while

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Adults: Protect Yourself with Pneumococcal Vaccines*, (Sep. 2014) <http://www.cdc.gov/features/adult-pneumococcal/> (last visited Jan. 28, 2015).

² Id.

³ Id.

⁴ Id.

PCV13 also provides protection against pneumonia.⁵ Section 400.141, F.S., specifically requires nursing homes to vaccinate new residents with PPV within 60 days of admission, subject to some exceptions.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 332 amends s. 400.141, F.S., to remove the requirement that nursing homes vaccinate eligible new admissions with the PPV and instead allows eligible new admissions to be vaccinated with any pneumococcal vaccination that is recommended by the CDC.

The bill establishes an effective date of July 1, 2015.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

Nursing homes and nursing home residents may see a positive fiscal impact due to having additional pneumococcal vaccination options from which to choose.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

⁵ Id.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends section 400.141 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

By Senator Grimsley

21-00442-15

2015332__

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to nursing home facility pneumococcal
 3 vaccination requirements; amending s. 400.141, F.S.;
 4 requiring a resident of a licensed facility to be
 5 assessed for eligibility for pneumococcal vaccination
 6 or revaccination by a specified date and, if
 7 indicated, to be vaccinated or revaccinated by a
 8 specified date; deleting obsolete provisions; making
 9 technical changes; providing an effective date.

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

11

12

13 Section 1. Paragraph (t) of subsection (1) of section
 14 400.141, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

15 400.141 Administration and management of nursing home
 16 facilities.—

17 (1) Every licensed facility shall comply with all
 18 applicable standards and rules of the agency and shall:

19 (t) Assess each resident within 5 business days after
 20 admission all residents for eligibility for pneumococcal
 21 polysaccharide vaccination or revaccination. If indicated, the
 22 resident shall be vaccinated or revaccinated (PPV) and vaccinate
 23 residents when indicated within 60 days after admission the
 24 effective date of this act in accordance with the
 25 recommendations of the United States Centers for Disease Control
 26 and Prevention, subject to exemptions for medical
 27 contraindications and religious or personal beliefs. ~~Residents~~
 28 ~~admitted after the effective date of this act shall be assessed~~
 29 ~~within 5 working days of admission and, when indicated,~~

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21-00442-15

2015332__

30 vaccinated within 60 days in accordance with the recommendations
 31 of the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,
 32 subject to exemptions for medical contraindications and
 33 religious or personal beliefs. Immunization may shall not be
 34 provided to a ~~any~~ resident who provides documentation that he or
 35 she has been immunized as required by this paragraph. ~~This~~
 36 ~~paragraph does not prohibit~~ A resident may elect to receive from
 37 ~~receiving~~ the immunization from his or her personal physician
 38 and, if such election is made, the if he or she so chooses. A
 39 ~~resident who chooses to receive the immunization from his or her~~
 40 ~~personal physician~~ shall provide proof of the immunization to
 41 the facility. The agency may adopt and enforce any rules
 42 necessary to comply with or implement this paragraph.
 43 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015.

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THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

COMMITTEES:

Finance and Tax, *Vice Chair*
Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services
Communications, Energy, and Public Utilities
Community Affairs
Fiscal Policy
Regulated Industries

JOINT COMMITTEE:

Joint Legislative Auditing Committee, *Chair*

SENATOR JOSEPH ABRUZZO

Minority Whip
25th District

February 16th, 2015

The Honorable Rene Garcia
The Florida Senate
310 Senate Office Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Chairman Garcia:

Please accept this letter as a formal request to excuse myself from the Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services, Wednesday, February 18th. Due to the very recent birth of my first child I am unable to attend this week's committee meetings.

Please let me know if I can provide you with any further information related to this matter. Thank you in advance for your understanding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JA".

Joseph Abruzzo

Cc: Diana Scarlet Pigott, Staff Director

REPLY TO:

- 12300 Forest Hill Boulevard, Suite 200, Wellington, Florida 33414-5785 (561) 791-4774 FAX: (888) 284-6495
- 110 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, Belle Glade, Florida 33430-3900 (561) 829-1410
- 222 Senate Office Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5025

Senate's Website: www.flsenate.gov

ANDY GARDINER
President of the Senate

GARRETT RICHTER
President Pro Tempore