

MINUTES OF THE SENATE FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Pete Brungardt at 10:30 a.m. on February 4, 2004 in Room 231-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except:
Senator Donald Betts- excused

Committee staff present:
Russell Mills, Legislative Research
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes' Office
John Beverlin, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:
Janet Schalansky, Secretary, Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services

Others attending:
See Attached List.

Chairperson Brungardt called the meeting to order and asked the committee for bill introductions.

Senator Vratil asked the committee to introduce a bill concerning income tax credits for contributions to community service organizations involved in addiction recovery and crime prevention.

Senator Teichman made a motion to introduce the bill. The motion was seconded by Senator Gilstrap. The motion to introduce the bill passed.

Senator Vratil asked the committee to introduce a bill concerning tax exemptions for hospital property.

Senator Teichman made a motion to introduce the bill. The motion was seconded by Senator Barnett. The motion to introduce the bill passed.

Chairperson Brungardt welcomed Janet Schalansky to the podium.

Janet Schalansky provided a department overview of the Department of Social & Rehabilitation Services (Attachment 1).

Chairperson Brungardt asked the committee for questions.

Senator Clark asked about page nine. He wanted to know whether it was possible to have duplicated numbers if a child was listed in foster care and then adopted, and therefore placed also on the adoption line.

Ms. Schalansky stated that it was possible if the child moved from foster care to adoption within the same year.

Senator Vratil asked for the reason for the decrease of child support numbers.

Ms. Schalansky stated that SRS did not have a specific reason. She stated that many advocates would cite the fact that SRS has left 700 employment spots vacant. She explained that when area directors prioritize staff, they will often fill a child protective service worker vacancy before they will fill a child support worker vacancy. She also stated that the reason may be because of the high case load.

Senator Teichman asked if there was less savings than expected with the closure of SRS offices.

Ms. Schalansky answered that the department had started to close offices to see if money could be saved. She stated that the important thing was the access by the consumers. She then explained the use of access points to the committee.

Senator Teichman asked how the reorganization was going and whether the department was receiving positive

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE at 10:30 a.m. on February 4, 2004 in Room 231-N of the Capitol.

feedback.

Ms. Schalansky explained that the feedback received from clients was good. She said there were employees that had to get used to the reorganization. She explained there are some staff that are not happy about having to drive farther.

Senator Vratil asked how an individual would go about getting on the Adult Abuse Registry.

Ms. Schalansky explained that the department would receive a complaint about abuse. They would then send out a social worker to investigate and, depending on the situation, law enforcement may also be sent. The department would then make a determination as to whether the individual perpetrated abuse against a senior. They would then notify the person accused of abuse. The accused could then appeal the charge to an appeals committee. She then explained that the accused's name would not go on the registry until after due process.

Senator Vratil asked how it compared to the Child Abuse Registry.

Ms. Schalansky stated it was the same process.

Senator Clark asked about new waivers applied for by the department.

Ms. Schalansky explained the legislature approved the Working Healthy Program for individuals who were hesitant to leave the disability rolls and go to work because of insurance fears. The program allowed people to go to work and get medicaid insurance, paying a premium based on their income. She explained that a waiver from the Federal Government was needed. Ms. Schalansky then explained the cash and counseling waiver. She explained that individuals received cash and counseling to enable more flexibility. Ms. Schalansky then explained an additional waiver for individuals with attendant care.

Chairperson Brungardt asked the committee for additional questions. None were asked.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 5, at 10:30 a.m. in room 231-N.