



## 2024 Legislative Summary

### Key Legislation:

- **HB893** - Standards for Guardian ad Litem attorneys and those representing the parent must be created and followed. The bill provides that beginning January 1, 2025, court-appointed counsel for a parent, guardian, or other adult in a child dependency case will be compensated in an amount no greater than \$330, or in a case for the termination of residual parental rights, \$680.
- **HB27 & SB39** - This is the Kinship Bill. Establishes the Parental Child Safety Placement Program to promote and support placements of children with relatives by local boards of social services in order to avoid foster care. The bill establishes the requirements for a parental child safety placement agreement, the procedure for assessing a proposed caregiver, and the process for terminating the placement. This article provides more details.
- **HB700** - This bill expands the use of higher education stipends to include room and board and other fees beyond tuition. It also expands those eligible based on when they entered foster care. Delegate Tata is a strong ambassador for youth aging out of foster care without family support.
- **HB 777** - Kids can stay in their current school district if placement status changes with some restrictions.
- **HB 453** - Reduces barrier crime requirements from 10 to 5 years for kinship adults seeking a kinship placement. Applies to felony drug convictions and some misdemeanor assault & battery charges not related to minors. This is a considerable issue with minority families and will pay the way for more kin placements.
- **HB1313** - This Bill did not pass this session because of the financial impact. It was “left on the table”. Increases the Fostering Futures participation age for youth existing from 21 to 23 which will help extend benefits for those still in school.
- **HB 587** - This bill created a work group to study the implementation of an unaccompanied minor housing program.

### Budget:

- Fund 7% foster care & adoption COLA - \$7 million
- Appropriate non general funds for LDSS - \$85.2 million NGF \$24.2 million
- Fund Child Welfare Forecast - \$3.2 million
- Fund Drivers License Foster Youth - \$620,000
- Fund Kin First Consultants - \$504,154
- Great Expectations (community college support) Program - \$1 million
- Child Dependency Cases (see HB 893) - \$6.3 million
- Training Academy for Social Services Employees - \$5.5 million
- \$3 million pilot programs that increase the number of foster care children adopted.