

INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS & REVENUE

Budget Review Subcommittee on Human Resources

Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of the 2021 Interim

July 7, 2021

Call to Order and Roll Call

The 2nd meeting of the Budget Review Subcommittee on Human Resources of the Interim Joint Committee on Appropriations & Revenue was held on Wednesday, July 7, 2021, at 11:00 AM, in Room 129 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Stephen Meredith, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Stephen Meredith, Co-Chair; Representative Danny Bentley, Co-Chair; Senators Ralph Alvarado, Karen Berg, and Danny Carroll; Representatives Adam Bowling, Deanna Frazier, Kimberly Poore Moser, Melinda Gibbons Prunty, Susan Westrom, and Lisa Willner.

Guests: Marta Miranda-Straub, Commissioner, Department for Community Based Services (DCBS), Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS); Lesa Dennis, Deputy Commissioner, DCBS, CHFS; Laura Begin, Staff Assistant and Legislative Liaison, DCBS, CHFS; Christa Bell, Director, Division of Protection and Permanency, DCBS, CHFS; Victoria Elridge, Commissioner, Department for Aging and Independent Living (DAIL), CHFS; Jessica Wayne, Assistant Director, Division of Guardianship, DAIL, CHFS; Richard Bartlett, Trauma Coordinator, Kentucky Hospital Association; and Julia Costich, JD, PhD, Chair, Kentucky Trauma Advisory Committee.

LRC Staff: Miriam Fordham, Kevin Newton, and Benjamin Thompson

Chair Meredith requested a moment of silence in honor of the passing of Senator Tom Buford.

Approval of Minutes

Representative Gibbons Prunty moved to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2021, meeting of the subcommittee. Representative Bentley seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved without objection.

Update on Funding for Social Workers

Commissioner Miranda-Straub, Ms. Dennis, and Ms. Begin provided a presentation on the duties of the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS), particularly the social work portion of their responsibilities.

In response to questions from Chair Meredith, Ms. Dennis stated that the decrease in the number of children in state custody is due to an increase in prevention efforts and in-home services, though the COVID-19 pandemic likely contributed to some of the decrease. Ms. Bell noted that DCBS measures success by looking at the decrease in the number of children in state custody and the effectiveness of in-home services. Ms. Bell stated that with an additional \$6 million investment in in-home prevention services for Fiscal Year 2020, the state saw a \$15 million reduction in out-of-home services.

In response to a question from Representative Westrom, Commissioner Miranda-Straub stated that she did not have data on hand regarding the average age of frontline social workers, but that roughly 40 percent had been in the job for less than a year. Ms. Bell said that families that participate in the Family First Prevention Services program had seen a 96 percent reduction in the need for out-of-home care.

In response to a question from Representative Moser, Commissioner Miranda-Straub noted that systemic family therapy uses a team of experts that have low caseloads and who live within the community to work with a family when needed, regardless of the day or time.

In response to a question from Senator Berg, Ms. Bell stated that DCBS does track outcomes for the youth who leave DCBS custody at or after the age of eighteen.

In response to a question from Representative Gibbons Prunty, Ms. Bell noted that DCBS does have some flexible funds available to assist families. Ms. Bell provided an example of DCBS providing funding to help pay for vehicle repairs so that parents are able to maintain employment.

Update on Guardianship Caseloads

Commissioner Elridge and Ms. Wayne provided an update on the guardianship program and the efforts the Department for Aging and Independent Living (DAIL) has taken to optimize finances and reduce caseloads in the guardianship program.

In response to questions from Chair Meredith, Commissioner Elridge stated that DAIL was requesting funding for 45 additional staff in order to reduce guardianship caseloads. Ms. Wayne noted that private guardians are court appointed and that, by statute, a guardian is entitled to a fee of six percent of an individual's assets.

Status Update on Funding for the Kentucky Trauma Care System

Mr. Bartlett provided a presentation on the Kentucky Trauma Care System and its budgetary needs.

In response to a question from Chair Meredith, Mr. Bartlett said that in a preliminary report, 13,650 trauma cases were entered into Kentucky trauma registries in 2020.

In response to a question from Senator Berg, Dr. Costich stated that the Kentucky Trauma Care System does not have a hard number on the cost of trauma in Kentucky.

There being no further business before the subcommittee, Representative Bentley moved to adjourn the meeting. Representative Westrom seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:41 PM with no objections.