



Megan Byrnett

## *Bill Analysis*

*Legislative Service Commission*

### **H.B. 289**

126th General Assembly  
(As Introduced)

**Rep. White**

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#### **BILL SUMMARY**

- Establishes new duties for the Ohio Family and Children First Cabinet Council and family and children first county councils.
- Establishes the Ohio commitments to child well-being in statute.
- Creates the Ohio Family and Children First Cabinet Council Advisory Board.

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#### **CONTENT AND OPERATION**

##### **Ohio Family and Children First Cabinet Council duties**

(R.C. 121.37(B))

Current law provides for the Ohio Family and Children First Cabinet Council.<sup>1</sup> The stated purpose of the Council is to help families seeking government services by streamlining and coordinating services for families seeking assistance for their children. The Council must provide for all of the following:

(1) Reviews of service and treatment plans for children when such reviews are requested;

(2) Assistance to meet the needs of children referred by the county family and children first councils, as the Council determines is necessary;

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<sup>1</sup> *The Council is composed of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Directors of Youth Services, Job and Family Services, Mental Health, Health, Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, and Budget and Management.*

(3) Monitoring and supervision of a system for infants and toddlers with developmental disabilities or delays and their families.

Under the bill, the Council must provide for all of the following, in addition to meeting the requirements of current law:

(1) Development and implementation of an interagency process to select the indicators that will be used to measure progress toward achievement of Ohio's commitments to child well-being and update the indicators on an annual basis;<sup>2</sup>

(2) Development and implementation of an interagency system to monitor progress towards achievement of the commitments to child well-being in the state and in each county;

(3) Development of an annual plan that identifies state-level interagency efforts taken to ensure progress towards achievement of the commitments to child well-being;

(4) An annual report on the status of efforts to meet the commitments to child well-being to be submitted to the Governor and the General Assembly and made available to any other person on request.

**Family and children first county council duties**

(R.C. 121.37(C)(2))

Current law requires each board of county commissioners to establish a family and children first county council. The county council must provide for all of the following:

(1) Referrals to the Cabinet Council of those children for whom the county council cannot provide adequate services;

(2) Development and implementation of a process that annually evaluates and prioritizes services, fills service gaps where possible, and invents new approaches to achieve better results for families and children;

(3) Participation in the development of a county-wide system for infants and toddlers with developmental disabilities or delays and their families;

(4) Maintenance of an accountability system to monitor the county council's progress in achieving results for families and children;

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<sup>2</sup> See "Ohio's commitments to child well-being" below.

(5) Establishment of a mechanism to ensure ongoing input from a broad representation of families who are receiving services within the county system.

Under the bill, county councils must provide for the following in addition to meeting the requirements of current law:<sup>3</sup>

(1) Development and implementation of an interagency system to monitor the county's progress toward achievement of Ohio's commitments to child well-being;

(2) Development and implementation of an interagency process to identify local priorities in relation to Ohio's commitments to child well-being and associated indicators established by the Cabinet Council under the bill;

(3) Development of an annual plan that identifies the county's interagency efforts to ensure achievement of Ohio's commitments to child well-being;

(4) An annual report on the status of efforts by the county to meet Ohio's commitments to child well-being to be submitted to the county's board of county commissioners and the Cabinet Council. This report must be made available to any other person on request.

### **Ohio's commitments to child well-being**

(R.C. 121.373)

The bill establishes the Ohio commitments to child well-being,<sup>4</sup> which represent efforts of Ohio government and citizens to meet the following goals:<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Certain duties provided in the bill may require the amendment of duties under current law. For example, current law requires the county council to maintain a system to monitor the county's progress in achieving results for families and children. The bill requires the county council to develop a process to monitor the county's progress toward achievement of Ohio's commitments to child well-being, which may overlap or duplicate what current law requires.*

<sup>4</sup> *The commitments to child well-being are principles outlined by Governor Bob Taft in 2000. More information may be found at <http://www.ohiofcf.org/vision.asp>, last visited June 9, 2005.*

<sup>5</sup> *The commitments are placed into law in order to clarify their meaning as they relate to new duties of the Council. However, the use of the term "commitment" may be seen as creating a legal duty on the part of the state to provide the services needed to meet the commitment or an entitlement that the General Assembly may not wish to create.*

- (1) That expectant parents and newborns thrive;
- (2) That infants and toddlers thrive;
- (3) That children are ready for school;
- (4) That children and youth succeed in school;
- (5) That youth choose healthy behaviors;
- (6) That youth successfully transition into adulthood.

**Ohio Family and Children First Cabinet Council Advisory Board**

(R.C. 121.374)

The bill creates the Ohio Family and Children First Cabinet Council Advisory Board to provide guidance to the Council regarding efforts to meet Ohio's commitments to child well-being. Under the bill, the Governor is required to appoint one member from the Governor's office to serve on the Board. The Speaker of the House of Representatives must appoint two members of the House of Representatives, each from a different political party. The President of the Senate must appoint two members of the Senate, each from a different political party. The Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President of the Senate are each to appoint three members of the general public who must be persons who use a service provided by an agency represented on a family and children first county council.

Each member of the Board is required to serve until a replacement member is appointed. Members of the Board are not to be compensated.

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**HISTORY**

ACTION	DATE	JOURNAL ENTRY
Introduced	06-02-05	p. 898

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