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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Padilla LAST UPDATED _____
ORIGINAL DATE 1/27/2024
BILL _____
SHORT TITLE Fostering Connections Program NUMBER Senate Bill 30
ANALYST Garcia

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT* (dollars in thousands)

Agency/Program	FY24	FY25	FY26	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
CYFD	\$0	Up to \$40.0	Up to \$40.0	Up to \$80.0	Recurring	General Fund

Parentheses () indicate expenditure decreases.

*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Relates to an appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Administration for Children and Families (ACF)

Agency Analysis Received From

Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD)

Office of Family Representative and Advocacy (OFRA)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Senate Bill 30

Senate Bill 30 removes the current requirement associated with the Fostering Connections statute that requires a youth to be adjudicated pursuant to the Children's Code or tribal law prior to being eligible for CYFD's Fostering Connections Program. This change would expand eligibility to youth who were in CYFD custody but not adjudicated or under a voluntary placement agreement.

This bill does not contain an effective date and, as a result, would go into effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns, or May 15, 2024, if enacted.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

No appropriation is contained within the bill.

CYFD notes no fiscal impact to the department, as CYFD already has an extended foster care

program in place and is able to draw down federal Title IV-E funds to cover the costs associated with this service population, and the agency received general fund and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding to support the fostering connections programs. The department estimates SB30 might expand the service population by roughly 10 adults, and these costs could be absorbed with existing resources.

Given the relatively small number of adults who might now be eligible for the Fostering Connections program as a result of this bill (roughly 10 adults), LFC estimates the fiscal impact of this bill to be minimal.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

According to the federal Administration for Children and Families, youth aging out of foster care experience considerable challenges. One in four adults who age out will experience homelessness by age 19; one in five will be incarcerated by age 19, and one in 10 will become parents by age 19. Additionally, just 57 percent of adults who age out of foster care report being employed at age 21.

In 2019, the Legislature adopted the Fostering Connections Act, which provides an extended foster care program, extended the age of support and services available to young adults involved with CYFD from age 18 to age 21. Extended support programs include supportive housing, connections to community-based behavioral health services, job assistance, food access, and financial assistance for higher education. The Fostering Connections program is voluntary, and young adults who age out of foster care are not required to receive services. In FY23, CYFD reported roughly 280 young adults received in-home services through the Fostering Connections program; 58 young adults participated in extended foster care behavioral health service coordination, and roughly 34 young adults received transitional living supportive housing.

Currently, young adults who are the subject of abuse or neglect or families in need of court-ordered services (FINCOS) but who turn 18 before being adjudicated, and youth who emancipate from CYFD custody while the subject of voluntary placement agreements are ineligible for the Fostering Connections program.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

Currently, CYFD tracks several performance measures associated with child well-being and the Fostering Connections program.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

CYFD notes any additional administrative implications would be absorbed with existing resources.

OFRA notes that an increase in adults eligible for the Fostering Connections program could result in increased filings, with a corresponding need for additional counsel by OFRA.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

If this bill is not enacted, young adults who are not the subject of abuse or neglect or families in need of court-ordered services (FINCOS) but who turn 18 before being adjudicated, and youth who are emancipated from department custody while the subject of voluntary placement agreements, would continue to be ineligible for the Fostering Connections program.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

RMG/rl/ne/al