



Rep. Maura Hirschauer

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10400HB3732ham001

LRB104 09568 KTG 23952 a

1 AMENDMENT TO HOUSE BILL 3732

2 AMENDMENT NO. \_\_\_\_\_. Amend House Bill 3732 by replacing  
3 everything after the enacting clause with the following:

4 "Section 5. The Children and Family Services Act is  
5 amended by adding Section 5.48 as follows:

6 (20 ILCS 505/5.48 new)

7 Sec. 5.48. Foster Care Case Management Pilot Program.

8 (a) Purpose. Illinois currently faces challenges with  
9 prolonged foster care placements and reunification delays.  
10 Only 18.6% of the children who entered substitute care in the  
11 Cook County region in Fiscal Year 2021 were reunified with  
12 their families within 24 months. The purpose of this Section  
13 is to create a case management pilot program to support  
14 biological parents who are highly motivated to reunite with  
15 their children. Under the pilot program, parents will receive  
16 their own dedicated case manager, separate from their child's

1 DCFS caseworker, to ensure comprehensive support. The pilot  
2 program will focus on children with a "Return Home" goal,  
3 improving case management services, connecting families to  
4 essential community resources, and integrating workforce  
5 development initiatives for foster youth and parents facing  
6 economic hardship.

7 (b) Legislative findings. The General Assembly finds the  
8 following:

9 (1) Family reunification, when safely possible, leads  
10 to better long-term outcomes for children.

11 (2) Many children in foster care experience  
12 instability due to insufficient family support systems and  
13 inadequate caseworker resources.

14 (3) Comprehensive support for parents, including job  
15 readiness and placement programs, is essential to creating  
16 a stable home environment for returning children.

17 (c) Subject to appropriation, the Department of Children  
18 and Family Services shall establish and administer a 4-year  
19 Foster Care Case Management Pilot Program that shall  
20 prioritize intensive case management for biological parents to  
21 support reunification with their children after an appropriate  
22 stabilization period. Under the Pilot Program, each biological  
23 parent of a child placed in foster care shall be assigned a  
24 dedicated case manager, separate from the child's caseworker,  
25 who is focused solely on the parent's needs. Case managers  
26 shall work with biological parents to address barriers to

1 reunification, including housing instability, substance abuse  
2 treatment, mental health care, legal issues, and parenting  
3 skill development. Services shall be provided with a  
4 trauma-informed, culturally competent approach to ensure that  
5 parents receive holistic and compassionate support. The Pilot  
6 Program shall include the following components:

7 (1) Pathway to reunification. Case managers shall  
8 develop individualized, time-bound reunification plans  
9 that outline specific steps for biological parents to  
10 regain custody of their children. Reunification plans  
11 shall be collaboratively created with biological parents,  
12 case managers, legal representatives, and the Department.  
13 Case managers shall facilitate connections to support  
14 services such as therapy, financial assistance, employment  
15 programs, and housing stabilization programs. Clear  
16 benchmarks and accountability measures shall be  
17 established to track progress.

18 (2) Care coordination. Case managers shall exclusively  
19 focus on biological parents to ensure undivided attention  
20 and a higher level of engagement. Program services shall  
21 include comprehensive assessments, mental health  
22 evaluations, substance use treatment referrals, family  
23 counseling, and reintegration support. Intensive,  
24 wraparound case management shall also be provided to  
25 ensure that biological parents receive continuous guidance  
26 and support throughout the reunification process.

1 Coordination with child welfare agencies, legal  
2 professionals, and community-based organizations shall be  
3 integral to service delivery.

4 (3) Reunification plans. For each foster child, case  
5 managers shall develop a structured reunification plan  
6 with assigned responsibilities, clear ownership, and a  
7 timeline to ensure sustained family stability  
8 post-reunification. Reunification plans shall be regularly  
9 reviewed and updated to reflect progress and evolving  
10 needs. Mandatory quarterly service plan reviews shall be  
11 conducted with a foster child's biological parent, case  
12 manager, child welfare agency, and any relevant support  
13 services. Case managers shall provide biological parents  
14 with hands-on guidance in securing stable housing,  
15 employment, and child care to maintain reunification.

16 (4) Family relationship building. Structured family  
17 engagement sessions shall be implemented during the first  
18 6 months to rebuild and strengthen bonds between foster  
19 children and their biological parents. Parenting coaching,  
20 supervised visitation, and family therapy shall be  
21 provided as part of the reunification process. Conflict  
22 resolution training and trauma-informed parenting  
23 strategies shall be integrated into engagement activities  
24 to foster a stable and supportive home environment.  
25 Mentorship and peer support groups shall be available for  
26 parents to connect with others navigating the

1 reunification process.

2 (5) Reunification goals. The Pilot Program shall aim  
3 to reunify at least 40% of newly placed foster children  
4 with their biological parents within 18 to 24 months.  
5 Success metrics shall include sustained reunification,  
6 parental employment stability, and housing security. The  
7 Department shall continuously evaluate the Pilot Program  
8 to determine best practices for expanding reunification  
9 efforts statewide.

10 (d) The Pilot Program shall have a workforce development  
11 component that provides all of the following:

12 (1) Employment and economic stability support.

13 (A) Parents shall have access to comprehensive job  
14 readiness training, including resume writing,  
15 interview coaching, workplace communication skills,  
16 and professional development workshops.

17 (B) A 12-week subsidized on-the-job employment  
18 program shall provide paid work experience in  
19 partnership with local businesses and workforce  
20 agencies.

21 (C) Vocational training opportunities shall be  
22 offered in high-demand industries, including health  
23 care, technology, skilled trades, and customer  
24 service.

25 (D) Case managers shall support parents in  
26 securing stable employment that aligns with their

1 skills and career aspirations, ensuring long-term  
2 economic self-sufficiency.

3 (2) Financial literacy and job placement assistance.

4 (A) Parents shall receive financial literacy  
5 training focused on budgeting, credit repair, debt  
6 management, and savings strategies.

7 (B) Job placement assistance shall include direct  
8 employer partnerships, apprenticeship programs, and  
9 career advancement opportunities.

10 (C) Child care assistance and transportation  
11 stipends shall be provided to remove barriers to  
12 employment.

13 (D) Wraparound financial coaching services shall  
14 be offered to support ongoing economic stability  
15 beyond reunification.

16 (3) Additional services.

17 (A) A separate legal caseworker structure shall be  
18 used for parents and foster children to ensure  
19 specialized advocacy and support.

20 (B) Parents shall have access to legal guidance  
21 regarding employment rights, housing assistance, and  
22 child welfare processes.

23 (C) Regular case conferences shall be conducted to  
24 assess parents' progress in both workforce development  
25 and reunification readiness.

26 (e) The Department shall conduct a 2-year review of the

1 Pilot Program to commence at the end of the second full year of  
2 the Pilot Program. During its review, the Department shall  
3 evaluate and determine the scalability and long-term viability  
4 of the Pilot Program.

5 Beginning one year after the Pilot Program's  
6 implementation date, and each year thereafter, the Department  
7 shall submit a report to the General Assembly on reunification  
8 rates, family engagement metrics, funding adjustments, and  
9 workforce development outcomes under the Pilot Program. The  
10 final report shall be submitted at the end of the final full  
11 year of the 4-year pilot period or as soon thereafter as  
12 practical."