



Legislative Council Staff

Research Note

Version: Final

Date: 6/12/2017

Bill Number

Senate Bill 17-016

Sponsors

**Senators Neville T. & Jahn
Representative Nordberg**

Short Title

**County Choice Child Protection
Teams**

Research Analyst

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Status

This research note reflects the final version of the bill and becomes effective on August 9, 2017, assuming no referendum petition is filed.

Background

This bill was referred to the General Assembly by the Legislative Audit Committee as a result of the October 2014 Performance Audit of Child Welfare. The audit found that there was a wide range in counties' compliance with the child protection teams' requirements, and counties reported mixed opinions about the value of the child protection teams.

A child protection team is a local, multidisciplinary advisory team that is convened to review the assessments made by child welfare staff. It consists of representatives from local law enforcement and judicial agencies, child welfare agencies, school districts, health and mental health care providers, and members of the lay community. Child protection teams make recommendations about particular cases and the child welfare system generally. Currently, counties with 50 or more annual referrals of suspected or known child abuse are required to convene a child protection team. Convening child protection teams is optional for counties with fewer than 50 reports. The bill makes convening a child protection team optional for all counties.

Senate Action

Senate Health and Human Services Committee (January 25, 2017). At the hearing, representatives of the Colorado Department of Human Services, the Jefferson County Department of Human Services, and the Boulder County Commissioners' Office testified in support of the bill. A representative of the Colorado League of Women Voters testified against the bill. A

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representative of the Office of the Child Protection Ombudsman testified in a neutral position on the bill.

The committee adopted amendment L.001, and referred the bill, as amended, to the Senate Committee of the Whole. The amendment:

- clarified that counties are not required to convene child protection teams, but may convene these teams at their discretion;
- required the Colorado Department of Human Services to report at its SMART Government Act meeting on county child protection teams that are convened; and
- made conforming amendments to the bill.

Senate second reading (January 30, 2017). The Senate adopted the Senate Health and Human Services Committee report and passed the bill on second reading, as amended.

Senate third reading (February 1, 2017). The Senate passed the bill on third reading with no amendments.

House Action

House Public Health Care and Human Services Committee (March 14, 2017). At the hearing, representatives of the Colorado Department of Human Services, the Jefferson County Department of Human Services, and Boulder County testified in support of the bill. A representative of the Colorado League of Women Voters testified against the bill. A representative of the Office of the State Auditor testified in a neutral position on the bill.

The committee referred the bill to the House Committee of the Whole with no amendments.

House second reading (March 20, 2017). The House passed the bill on second reading with no amendments.

House third reading (March 21, 2017). The House passed the bill on third reading with no amendments.

Relevant Research

- Performance Audit: Child Welfare October 2014, Office of the State Auditor <http://tinyurl.com/zqrh2ef>



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