

VOICES FOR VIRGINIA'S CHILDREN

2022 CHILD WELFARE LEGISLATIVE OUTCOMES

Bills We Supported

- [SB 56](#)** **Foster Care Prevention program | Senator Favola**
Status: Tabled (died) in House Appropriations (money committee)
- Summary:** Establishes the Foster Care Prevention program to facilitate placements with relatives and ensure that such relatives are provided with the resources necessary to provide care for the child. The bill provides that a child is eligible to participate in the Foster Care Prevention program if the local department of social services (local department) determines that (i) the child is in the custody of a relative pursuant to a court order; (ii) the child's parent or guardian voluntarily placed the child with such relative; (iii) the child demonstrates a strong attachment to the relative, and the relative has a strong commitment to caring for the child; and (iv) had the relative not agreed to take custody of the child, the local department likely would have filed a petition to remove the child from his home due to an imminent threat of child abuse or neglect.
- [SB 307](#)** **Kinship foster care; notice and appeal | Senator Mason**
Status: Passed and signed by the Governor
-  **Summary:** Requires local boards of social services (local boards), upon receiving a request from a child's relative to become a kinship foster parent, to provide the relative with an application to become a kinship foster parent within 15 days.
- [SB 689](#)** **Foster Care; Barrier crimes | Senator Mason**
Status: House changed the bill to a study that VDSS will be directed to conduct.
- Summary:** Replaces the current list of barrier crimes that apply to foster and adoptive parents with certain barrier crimes set forth in federal law and regulations.
- [HB 353](#)** **Unaccompanied homeless youth; consent to medical care | Delegate Willett**
Status: Left in House Rules
- Summary:** This bill was laid on the table (died) in subcommittee. It was recommended that the bill become a study of which the Commission on Youth will take up this year.

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Bills We Supported

[HB 717](#)

Unaccompanied homeless youths; services; consent | Delegate Filler Corn

Status: Passed and signed by the Governor



Summary: Provides that an unaccompanied homeless youth shall be deemed an adult for the purpose of consenting to housing, including emergency shelter, and other services and establishes requirements for providers of housing, including emergency shelter, and other services for unaccompanied homeless youth.

[SB 396](#)

Foster care placements; court review; best interests of the child | Senator Edwards

Status: Passed (funded in the budget) and signed by the Governor



Summary: Provides that the court has the authority to review a foster care plan placement determination by a local board of social services.

[HB 349](#)

Foster care; housing support for persons between ages 18 and 21 | Delegate Tata

Status: Passed (funded in the budget) and signed by the Governor



Summary: Directs local departments of social services (local department) to provide housing support to any person who (i) is 18 years of age or older but less than 21 years of age, (ii) was in foster care under the custody of a local department (a) upon turning 18 years of age or (b) immediately prior to commitment to the Department of Juvenile Justice and is transitioning from such commitment to self-sufficiency, and (iii) declines to participate in the Fostering Futures program. The bill requires that such housing support be provided in the form of payments not less than the amount that such person would otherwise receive for housing support through participation in the Fostering Futures program.

[HB 353](#)

Unaccompanied homeless youth; consent to medical care | Delegate Willett

Status: Left in House Rules

Summary: This bill was laid on the table (died) in subcommittee. It was recommended that the bill become a study of which the Commission on Youth will take up this year.



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Bills We Supported

[HB 653](#) **Foster care; DSS to establish and implement a collaborative local board placement program | Delegate Wampler**
Status: Passed (funded in the budget) and signed by the Governor



Summary: Directs the Department of Social Services to establish and implement a collaborative local board placement program to increase kinship placements and the number of locally approved foster homes. The bill provides that such program shall require local boards of social services (local boards) to enter into partnership agreements with other local boards to work collaboratively to (i) facilitate approval of kinship foster parents through engagement, assessment, and training; (ii) increase the capacity of local boards to recruit, train, and develop foster parents; and (iii) expand the pool of available foster homes within and across the localities of such local boards.

Budget Amendments We Supported

[Item 345](#) **iFoster Care Portal | Delegate Brewer; Senator Mason**
[#4h](#) **Status: Included in budget and signed by the Governor**



Summary: This amendment provides \$98,038 the first year and \$66,783 from nongeneral funds the second year for the development of the iFoster Portal or an App with similar functionality to include Virginia and locality specific resources available to individuals who are currently being served or have been served in the foster care system, as well as professionals serving the foster care population. The portal is a free internet resource that includes education assistance and workforce development options, as well as independent living resources geared for young adults who have experienced foster care.

[Item 345](#) **Foster Care Driver's License Program | Delegate Keam; Senator Favola**
[#3h](#) **Status: Not included in the House or Senate budget**



Summary: To develop and implement a statewide driver's licensing program to support foster care youth in obtaining a driver's license.

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Budget Amendments We Supported

[Item 345](#) **Parent Representation Center Pilot | Delegate Kilgore; Senator Edwards**
[#5h](#) **Status:** Not included in the House or Senate budget

Summary: This amendment provides \$1.1 million from the general fund and \$360,202 from non-general funds the first year and \$1.1 million from the general fund and \$355,686 from non-general funds the second year to create two Parent Representation Pilot Centers. The two centers will be multidisciplinary law offices employing a total of six, full-time, specially trained attorneys, two social workers, and two parent advocates representing parents in child removal and foster care proceedings.

[Item 350](#) **HB 716 Relative Foster Appeals | Delegate Gooditis; Senate Mason**
[#1h](#) **Status:** Included in final budget and signed by the Governor



Summary: This amendment provides \$102,758 the first year and \$87,595 the second year from the general fund and a like amount of matching federal funds each year and two positions for the fiscal impact of House Bill 716 which allows relatives to file an appeal regarding denials of a relative's application to become a kinship foster parent with the Commissioner of Social Services, and requires the Board of Social Services to adopt certain regulations regarding the timeline of such appeals.

[Item 345](#) **State Infrastructure Family First | Senator Mason**
[#2s](#) **Status:** Not included in the House or Senate budget

Summary: This amendment provides 22 positions the first year and \$1.2 million general fund and \$1.2 million from nongeneral funds and 22 positions the second year to the Department of Social Services to expand the state infrastructure needed to comply with federal requirements and support the local departments of social services related to the Family First Prevention Services Act. The department will utilize time limited federal funding to cover the first year costs of the positions.

[Item 345](#) **Child Welfare Stipend Program | Senator Mason**
[#3s](#) **Status:** Not included in the House or Senate budget

Summary: his amendment provides \$3.4 million general fund and \$2.0 million nongeneral fund the first year and \$6.7 million from the general fund and \$4.1 nongeneral fund the second year for local departments of social services (LDSS) to hire additional In-Home Services Specialists positions in order to provide services to children who are high or very high risk of entry into foster care. This funds 69 positions in the first year and 69 positions in the second year for a total of 138 positions in the biennium. The local cost impact is \$991,036 the first year and \$1,982,072 in the second year.



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Budget Amendments We Supported

[Item 345](#) **State-Funded Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program | Senator Mason**
[#4s](#) **Status:** Not included in the House or Senate budget

Summary: This amendment provides \$312,458 from the general fund and \$296,798 from non-general funds and five positions the first year and \$308,536 from nongeneral funds and five positions the second year to support the staff time of local departments of social services (LDSS) in maintaining state-funded kinship guardianship assistance program.

[Item 345](#) **Foster Care Prevention Program | Senate Favola**
[#10s](#) **Status:** Included in final budget and signed by the Governor



Summary: This amendment funds \$15.8 million the first year and \$17.2 million the second year and one position each year from the general fund for the fiscal impact of Foster Care Prevention Program payments for relatives (Senate Bill 56). The funding includes program payments to relatives, one-time system costs, the costs for local departments of social services and one position at the Department of Social Services to administer the program.

[Item 345](#) **Barrier Crimes Bill - Staff and System Costs | Senator Edwards**
[#2s](#) **Status:** Not included in the House or Senate budget

Summary: This amendment provides \$815,000 the first year and \$190,000 the second year from the general fund to fund the implementation of recommendations from the Joint Study on Barrier Crimes regarding staff and one-time system costs at the Department of Social Services.

[Item 212](#) **VCCS - Great Expectations | Senator Mason**
[#4s](#) **Status:** Included in final budget and signed by the Governor



Summary: \$500,000 the first year and \$500,000 the second year from the general fund is designated for the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) to develop a state-funded grant program to provide a range of funding for the Great Expectations Program in the following areas: the hiring of college coaches or mentors, housing stipends, child care, and transportation needs.

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Governor's Budget Items

Federal Funds for Local Staff and Operations

- Staff Salary Increase - \$32 million (10% increase in state salaries)

Funding for the development of an updated child welfare system (OASIS Replacement) that meets federal requirements

- \$22 million

Fidelity monitoring and evaluation of evidence-based prevention services, appropriates federal Transition Act funding and fully funds salaries for allocated program positions. (NOT SERVICES)

- \$9 million

Language appropriating State and Local Relief Funds for trauma-informed care networks

- \$1 million

Mandated Reinvestment for Child Welfare - Provides additional resources for ongoing mandated activities such as post adoption case management services, mutual family assessments, foster care and adoption services, and substance abuse services. Fund mandated reinvestment in child welfare services

- \$5 Million

Two additional positions for the Office of the Children's Ombudsman

- \$400,000 (this funding was removed in the House proposed budget)