

House File 2356 - Enrolled

House File 2356

AN ACT

ESTABLISHING THE STATE PUBLIC DEFENDER'S PILOT PROJECT
TO IMPLEMENT INNOVATIVE MODELS OF CHILD WELFARE LEGAL
REPRESENTATION AS THE PROJECT TO PRESERVE FAMILIES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

Section 1. Section 13B.13, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

13B.13 State public defender ~~pilot project~~ — ~~child welfare legal representation project to preserve families.~~

1. Notwithstanding any other provision of the law to the contrary, ~~for each fiscal year for the period beginning July 1, 2020, and ending June 30, 2025,~~ the state public defender may ~~establish a pilot~~ shall administer and maintain the project to implement innovative models of legal representation in order preserve families to assist families involved in the child welfare system. ~~The state public defender shall have sole discretion to establish and implement the pilot project.~~

2. The state public defender may ~~implement~~ administer and maintain the new pilot project in up to sixteen counties to preserve families throughout the state.

3. ~~The purpose of the pilot project is to preserve families~~ shall implement, administer, and study innovative ways models of legal representation, through a team approach or ~~through~~ other methods, to achieve positive outcomes for families, reduce trauma to young children, and deliver financial benefits to families and their communities.

4. The state public defender may coordinate with other agencies and organizations to ~~implement the pilot project administer and maintain~~, seek grant funding for, and ~~measure the results~~ analyze the outcomes of the project to preserve families.

5. The state public defender may appoint an attorney to represent an indigent person prior to initiation of formal proceedings, without court order, if such representation is deemed appropriate by the state public defender and relates to the purposes of the ~~pilot~~ project to preserve families.

6. The state public defender may adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A to administer this section.

PAT GRASSLEY
Speaker of the House

AMY SINCLAIR
President of the Senate

I hereby certify that this bill originated in the House and is known as House File 2356, Ninety-first General Assembly.

MEGHAN NELSON
Chief Clerk of the House

Approved _____, 2026

KIM REYNOLDS
Governor