

Senate File 143 - Introduced

SENATE FILE 143
BY COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

(SUCCESSOR TO SSB 1015)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to the state public defender pilot project for
2 child welfare legal representation.

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

1 Section 1. Section 13B.13, Code 2023, is amended to read as
2 follows:

3 **13B.13 State public defender pilot project — child welfare**
4 **legal representation.**

5 Notwithstanding any other provision of the law to the
6 contrary, for each fiscal year for the period beginning July 1,
7 2020, and ending June 30, ~~2024~~ 2025, the state public defender
8 may establish a pilot project to implement innovative models
9 of legal representation in order to assist families involved
10 in the child welfare system. The state public defender shall
11 have sole discretion to establish and implement the pilot
12 project. The state public defender may implement the new
13 pilot project in up to ~~six~~ sixteen counties throughout the
14 state. The purpose of the pilot project is to implement and
15 study innovative ways, through a team approach or through other
16 methods, to achieve positive outcomes for families, reduce
17 trauma to young children, and deliver financial benefits to
18 families and their communities. The state public defender
19 may coordinate with other agencies and organizations to
20 implement the pilot project, seek grant funding, and measure
21 the results. The state public defender may appoint an attorney
22 to represent an indigent person prior to initiation of formal
23 proceedings, without court order, if such representation is
24 deemed appropriate by the state public defender and relates to
25 the purposes of the pilot project.

26 EXPLANATION

27 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
28 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

29 This bill relates to the state public defender pilot project
30 for child welfare legal representation.

31 The bill extends the ending date for a state public
32 defender pilot project to implement innovative models of legal
33 representation in order to assist families involved in the
34 child welfare system from June 30, 2024, through June 30, 2025.

35 The bill increases the number of counties in which a pilot

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1 project may be implemented from 6 counties to 16 counties.