

CHAPTER 1130**CHILD WELFARE PILOT PROJECTS***H.F. 2462*

AN ACT directing the department of human services to implement child welfare diversion and mediation pilot projects.

Be It Enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Iowa:

Section 1. **CHILD WELFARE MEDIATION PILOT PROJECTS.** The department of human services shall implement one or more child welfare diversion and mediation pilot projects through the offices of the county attorney. The projects shall be implemented in separate counties commencing during the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2004, and ending June 30, 2005. The purposes of the projects are to divert selected child abuse and neglect cases that may otherwise result in a child in need of assistance adjudication, improve permanency for children, promote family unification, and reduce state expenditures associated with adjudication of child protection cases. Selection of children and families for participation in a pilot project shall be based upon diversion criteria mutually agreed upon by the department and a pilot project. The department shall be assisted by the pilot projects in collecting data to analyze the effectiveness of the pilot projects and the department shall submit an initial evaluation to the general assembly on or before December 15, 2007. The savings attributable to the pilot projects shall be calculated and may be allocated to the projects as necessary to assist with operating expenses.

Sec. 2. **CHILD IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE FAMILY CASE STAFFING PILOT PROJECT.** The department of human services shall implement a child in need of assistance family case staffing pilot project in at least two counties. Under the pilot project, unless the department determines that the pilot project approach would not be in the child's best interest, prior to a child in need of assistance petition being filed, the department shall conduct a full case staffing for the child's case. The staffing participants shall include but are not limited to relevant treatment providers, the child's parents or guardians, and other persons involved with the child. The purposes of the pilot project are to divert selected child abuse and neglect cases that may otherwise result in a child in need of assistance adjudication, improve permanency for children, promote family unification, and reduce state expenditures associated with adjudication of child in need of assistance cases.

Approved May 3, 2004