

HB 1563 -- DILIGENT SEARCHES

SPONSOR: Griffith

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Emerging Issues by a vote of 11 to 0.

This bill requires the Children's Division within the Department of Social Services to make diligent searches for the biological parent or parents in a timely manner after a child is placed into its custody. Additionally, when an initial emergency placement of a child is deemed necessary, the Children's Division is to diligently search and locate grandparents for placement of the child. If grandparents are deemed unavailable or unfit, then the Children's Division must make a diligent search to locate other relatives for placement of the child within 30 days from the time the emergency placement is deemed necessary for the child.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the current law does not provide for a satisfactory process for conducting searches and finding relatives for placement of children. Children's growth and development is enhanced when they are able to live with families. The state can do more to contract and work with adoption and placement organizations, decreasing the potential fiscal impact of this bill.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Griffith; Fosteradopt Connect; Arnie C. Ac Dienoff; and Sarah Bashore, Central Missouri Foster Care and Adoption Association.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.