

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

This bill implements recommendations found in the No Wrong Door report (prepared by Department of Public Safety, released January 2013).

Article 1 places a statewide program for sexually exploited youth in the Department of Health. The department shall create a director of child sex trafficking prevention position and provide grants to create and support regional navigators serving six regions of the state.

In article 2, the bill amends safe harbor provisions enacted in 2011 by eliminating language that would allow a 16 or 17 year old to be charged as a prostitute.

Article 3 appropriates general funds to the Departments of Health and Human Services to implement the bill and provide services to sexually exploited youth, including housing and supportive services and training.

Article 1: Department of Health

Section

- 1 Safe harbor for sexually exploited youth.** Directs the commissioner of health to establish a director of child sex trafficking prevention. Outlines the duties of the director, including providing training, maintaining information, applying for federal funding, managing grants, providing oversight, conducting evaluations, and developing policies.

Section

- 2 **Regional navigator grants.** Directs the commissioner of health, through the director of child sex trafficking prevention, to provide grants for regional navigators serving six regions of the state to coordinate resources and services for sexually exploited youth. Provides that each regional navigator must develop and annually submit a work plan to the director outlining a needs and resource assessment, grant goals and outcomes, and grant activities.
- 3 **Program evaluation.** Requires the director to conduct or contract for a comprehensive evaluation of the statewide program for sexually exploited youth. The first evaluation must be completed by June 30, 2015, and submitted to MDH by September 1, 2015, and then be conducted every two years thereafter.

Article 2: Safe Harbor Provisions

- 1 **Delinquent child.** Strikes language that would allow a 16 or 17 year old to be charged with being hired, offering to be hired, or agreeing to be hired by another to engage in sexual penetration or contact. (A juvenile acting as a patron or promoter could still be charged.) Effective August 1, 2014.
- 2 **Juvenile petty offender.** Conforming changes in line with section 1. Limits reference to prostitution offense to violations by *patrons*. (In effect, exempts from the definition of “juvenile petty offense” a juvenile charged with a misdemeanor-level prostitution offense *when acting as a patron*. This means the juvenile would receive an adjudication of delinquency, rather than be adjudicated as a petty offender. There are more disposition options available to the court on delinquency adjudication.) Effective August 1, 2014.
- 3 **Child in need of protection or services.** Amends the definition of a child in need of protection or services by striking a reference to juveniles engaged in prostitution. This would no longer be an offense under section 1. Replaces the reference with the term “sexually exploited youth” – which is being moved from clause (17) to clause (11). Effective August 1, 2014.
- 4 **Sexually exploited youth.** Corrects an oversight in the definition of sexually exploited youth by adding a citation that was missed in a sequence. The sequence lists first-, second-, fourth-, and fifth-degrees of criminal sexual conduct, but misses the third-degree crime.
- 5 **Repealer.** Repeals a diversion program for 16 and 17 year old juvenile prostitutes. This would no longer be an offense under section 1.

Article 3: Appropriations

- 1 **Department of Health.** Appropriates the following amounts from the general fund to MDH for the following purposes:
 - \$762,000 in FY 14 for grants to six regional navigators (see art. 1, § 2). Added to the base.

Section

- ▶ \$500,000 in FY14 and \$250,000 in FY15 for grants to provide training on sexual exploitation of youth. Added to the base.
- ▶ \$300,000 in FY15 for program evaluation. Added to the base.
- ▶ \$532,000 in both FY14 and FY15 for grants to outreach works for the safe harbor of sexually exploited youth program. Added to the base.
- ▶ \$1,000,000 in both FY14 and FY15 for supportive service grants for the safe harbor of sexually exploited youth program, including advocacy services, civil legal services, health care services, mental and chemical health services, education and employment services, aftercare and relapse prevention, and family reunification. Added to the base.
- ▶ \$82,550 in both FY14 and FY15 for the director of child sex trafficking prevention position. Added to the base.

2 Department of Human Services (DHS). Appropriates the following amounts from the general fund to DHS for the following purposes:

- ▶ \$4,472,500 in FY14 for a safe harbor shelter and housing fund to be spent in the following manner (and added to the base):
 - ▶ \$2,190,000 to increase emergency shelter bed capacity;
 - ▶ \$1,370,000 for transitional living programs;
 - ▶ \$547,500 for supportive housing services; and
 - ▶ \$365,000 to increase child foster care home capacity.
- ▶ \$4,000,000 in FY14 for renovation and construction of facilities to serve the housing and supportive services needs of sexually exploited youth. Onetime appropriation.