

Subject Office of the Foster Youth Ombudsperson

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Overview

This bill establishes the Office of the Foster Youth Ombudsperson and the Board of the Foster Youth Ombudsperson, and specifies data provisions related to the newly established office.

Summary

Section **Description**

- 1 Foster youth ombudsperson data.**

Proposes coding for § 13.876. Specifies foster youth ombudsperson data that are classified as private data; specifies that written investigation summaries maintained by the ombudsperson are classified as confidential data. Allows the ombudsperson to access juvenile placement and medical data.
- 2 Office of the Foster Youth Ombudsperson; board.**

Proposes coding for § 260C.80. Creates the Office of the Foster Youth Ombudsperson; specifies ombudsperson selection and service requirements and permits the ombudsperson to investigate matters related to youth in foster care.

Establishes the Board of the Foster Youth Ombudsperson, to make recommendations to the ombudsperson and staff and oversee the work of the ombudsperson. Specifies members of the board, terms, compensation, removal, and vacancy procedures.
- 3 Organization of the Office of the Foster Youth Ombudsperson.**

Proposes coding for § 260C.81. Allows the ombudsperson to select, appoint, and compensate staff; addresses additional administrative and staffing matters. Requires the ombudsperson to provide outreach, resources, and assistance to youth in foster care through direct engagement.
- 4 Powers of foster youth ombudsperson; investigation; action on complaints; recommendations.**

Proposes coding for § 260C.82. Allows the foster youth ombudsperson to:

Section	Description
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- establish a complaint process;
- determine the scope and manner of investigations;
- make conclusions, recommendations, and proposals to the governor or legislature;
- investigate administrative agency actions, including the placement of a youth in foster care;
- request and be given access to information from administrative agencies;
- subpoena individuals, in relation to an investigation or inquiry; and
- be present at court proceedings and related meetings, when requested by a youth in foster care.

Specifies civil liability immunity for the ombudsperson, except for acts demonstrating malicious intent or gross negligence.

Outlines the complaint and investigation process and requirements for facilities or family foster homes.

Specifies recommendations the ombudsperson may make to an administrative agency or judicial officer when the ombudsperson considers a complaint to be valid. Allows the ombudsperson to refer matters to the appropriate authorities and bring statutory issues to the governor and the legislature.

Allows the ombudsperson to apply for and receive grants from public and private entities.

Requires state district courts and administrative agencies to provide the ombudsperson with access to juvenile court data, foster care placement data, and certain medical data.

5 Appropriation; Office of the Foster Youth Ombudsperson.

Appropriates \$650,000 in fiscal year 2023 from the general fund to the governor's office to establish and operate the Office of the Foster Youth Ombudsperson and the Board of the Foster Youth Ombudsperson.



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