

Legislation Text

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Authorizing the Committee on Public Health and Human Services to hold hearings on the Department of Human Services' Community Umbrella Agencies scorecard.

WHEREAS, In 2006, after the tragic death of Danieal Kelly, Mayor John Street convened a child welfare review panel of local and national experts to review the Department of Human Services; and

WHEREAS, As part of its review, the panel learned that over 22 studies, reports and litigation about DHS practices had taken place over the past two decades, all of which contained similar themes, and most of which failed to lead to substantive change; and

WHEREAS, the panel made thirty-six recommendations for improvements which led to the creation of Improving Outcomes for Children (IOC), a system of outsourcing child welfare cases under the principle that a community neighborhood approach to service delivery makes a positive impact on children and families; and

WHEREAS, By designating Community Umbrella Agencies (CUAs) to become the single case manager provider for a region, it was expected that this model would increase provider accountability, decrease costs for services and improve the likelihood that children would achieve permanency with their biological families where possible; and

WHEREAS, In October 2017 the Department of Human Services released a scorecard to assess performance and track the quality of CUA service delivery among several domains including permanency, safety, case planning, financial stability, and workforce retention; and

WHEREAS, Seven out of the 10 CUAs, on an A-through-F scale, received a score of D, while the others received Cs. In addition, nearly all CUAs received the lowest grades-Ds and Fs-on both financial stability and completion of assessments; and

WHEREAS, Wordsworth Academy, which was closed last year after reports of a homicide and a decades-long history of sexual assault, was graded a C on safety and a B on supervision, thereby questioning the veracity and accuracy of the scorecard grades altogether when a child welfare agency can be rated average or above average despite engaging in gross incompetence, negligence, and misconduct; and

WHEREAS, In the spring of 2016, the Committee on Public Health and Human Services held a hearing on the state's downgrade of DHS' license, and among the challenges discussed were staff case overloads and the lack of integration between case workers and supervisors to make decisions about cases under the CUA system; and

WHEREAS, With the return of a fully operational license, it is imperative that DHS directly address the continuing administrative and operational challenges within a framework that demands people and organizations be held accountable; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Authorizes Committee on Public

Health and Human Services to hold hearings on the Department of Human Services' Community Umbrella Agencies scorecard.