SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 140

WHEREAS, The Department of Children and Family Services is required by the Children and Family Services Act (20 ILCS 505/7) to place children in its care in safe and adequate placements consistent with each child's health, safety and best interests; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Children and Family Services has adopted rules, entitled "Placement Selection Criteria", (89 Ill. Adm. Code Part 301.60) that provide that "all placement decisions will be made consistent with the safety, best interests and special needs of the child" and that consideration shall be given to "the least restrictive setting appropriate for the child which most closely approximates a family"; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Children and Family Services has adopted procedures, entitled "Psychiatric Hospitalization, Basic Premises Regarding Psychiatric Hospitalization" (DCFS Procedures 301.110(b)), that provide that "a psychiatric hospitalization is not a placement" and that "discharge and placement planning shall begin from the moment of admission"; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Children and Family Services is
the party to a federal court consent decree (B.H. et al., 88 C 5599, N.D. ILL) that provides that emergency shelter placements "shall be limited to 30 days"; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that the Auditor General is directed to conduct a performance audit of the Department of Children and Family Services' compliance with its obligations to place children in its care in placements consistent with their best interests; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the audit include, but not be limited to, the following determinations as they pertain to children (up to the age of 21) in the care of the Department of Children and Family Services in calendar years 2014 and 2015:

(1) The number of children who remain psychiatrically hospitalized beyond the time when they are clinically ready for discharge or beyond medical necessity for hospitalization, whichever is sooner, the reason they remain hospitalized, the length of time they remain hospitalized, the type of recommended placement, the barriers to timely placement, and whether they were placed in the recommended placement type after leaving the hospital;
(2) The number of children who remain in emergency shelters beyond 30 days, the reason they remain in an emergency shelter, the length of time they remain in an emergency shelter, the type of recommended placement, the barriers to timely placement, and whether they were placed in the recommended placement type after they were moved from the shelter;

(3) The number of children who remain in a detention center or Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facility solely because the Department cannot locate a placement for the child, the length of time they remain in a detention center or DJJ facility, the type of recommended placement, the barriers to timely placement, and whether they were placed in the recommended placement type after being released from detention or from the DJJ facility; and

(4) For each child meeting the criteria in subsection (1), (2), or (3) the following information: who was subsequently placed, how long it took the child to be placed, and whether the child was placed consistent with clinical recommendations; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Department of Children and Family Services shall cooperate fully and promptly with the Auditor General's Office in conducting this audit; and be it
RESOLVED, That the Auditor General commence this audit as soon as possible and distribute the report upon completion in accordance with Section 3-14 of the Illinois State Auditing Act.