

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS KNABE AND ANTONOVICH

January 16, 2007

Amendment to Item 11

Through a wide range of comprehensive service delivery innovations, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) has achieved marked success in protecting children, strengthening families and reducing the time children spend in foster care. In order to take this success even further, there is a growing need for skilled professionals to ensure that all services are offered and applied appropriately. However, there is currently a national shortage of educated and trained candidates available to be hired as new social workers to manage often complex DCFS cases.

A portion of these state augmentation dollars provides us with the opportunity to reduce caseloads through additional staff. Human Services Aides will join the career path to social work by integrating into social work units to perform para-professional services, thus enabling case-carrying Children's Social Workers to spend more time with children and families. However, DCFS currently augments its workforce by hiring and assigning cases to Children's Social Worker Trainees. We should ensure that Trainees also have the opportunity for paraprofessional and on-the-job field experiences prior to assuming a caseload. We owe this benefit, both to our Trainees and to the families they serve, to ensure that the momentum of improved child protection and strengthening of families continues in the right direction.

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WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Department of Children and Family Services, along with the Chief Administrative Office and the Department of Human Resources, to report back to the Board in 90 days with a plan for extended and enhanced training of Children's Social Workers Trainees.

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