

Senate Health and Human Services Committee

Kyle Baker 271-2609

SB 153-FN-A, making an appropriation for early childhood intervention services.

Hearing Date: February 7, 2017

Time Opened: 1:15 p.m.

Time Closed: 2:00 p.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Bradley, Avar, Gray, Fuller Clark and Hennessey

Members of the Committee Absent : None

Bill Analysis: This bill makes an appropriation to the department of health and human services for early childhood intervention services provided through the family centered early supports and services program.

Sponsors:

Sen. Woodburn
Rep. LeBrun

Sen. Bradley

Rep. M. MacKay

Who supports the bill: Sen. Jeff Woodburn, SD# 1; Colby Aiken; Sarah Aiken, Community Bridges; Rebecca Woitkowski, New Futures; Ken Norton, NAMI NH; Shelby McCarthy, Easter Seals; Michelle Merritt, CBHC; Rep. Christy Dolet Bartlett, Merr 19; Melissa Hinebauch; Beodonne Bhattarai, DD Council; Heather Donnell, Community Support Network; Lauren Baron, LRCS; Jennifer Bertrand; Lisa Beaudoin, ABLE NH; Forrest Beaudoin-Friede, ABLE NH; Treasa Ohlson-Martin; David Ossaff; Tricia Elsworth, Rise for Baby and Family; Marci Olson, Easter Seals; Melissa Hugener, Child and Family Services; Karen Willet, NHS; Makencie Willett; Lynne Thomas; Margaret Small-Porter; Carrol Allbertson; Layden Alberstson; Abby Rogers, March of Dimes; Kristen Sandford; Keith Kuenning, CFS; Suzanne Iverson, Community Partners; Gayle Perreault; Heidi Smith; Carrie Duran; Melissa Nemeth, DHHS; Hannah Call; Brady Call; Diane Baldue; Christopher Shuler, Community Bridges; Chris Santander, DHHS

Who opposes the bill: None

Who is neutral on the bill: None

Summary of testimony presented in support:

Senator Jeff Woodburn – Senate District 1

- This bill will make a large difference in lives of many families in our state.
- \$1.3 million to DHHS for increases in these services.
- These services will save the state money in the long run.

Colby Aiken – Concord NH

- Was born very premature and spent the first few years of life in the hospital.
- Due to early intervention services, was able to overcome a lot of challenges.
- It's a small price to pay now to make sure that children are successful.
- Will save money in the long run.

Rebecca Woitkowski - New Futures

- Early intervention is a critical and cost effective way to mitigate toxic stress.
- These services can end up saving money in the long run.
- Services are heavily overwhelmed and they need more resources to be successful.

Shelby McCarthy – Easter Seals

- Has a daughter who suffers from a disability.
- Easter Seals has provided early intervention services to help with her development.
- Because there is not enough funding to cover these services they need to pick what services their daughter will get.
- No children should be without the services they need to be successful.

Deodonne Bhattarai – NH Council on Development Disabilities

- Has a daughter who has benefitted greatly from early support services.
- These services should be a priority because they have huge cost savings long term for the state.

Foster Beaudoin –Friede – ABLE NH

- Data is clear, early support services work.
- Many long term cost saving effects from these services.
- These services need to be properly funded to make sure they are available for others to use.
- Due to these services, he has been able to graduate college and now is a co-owner of a gluten free bakery.

Toni Elsworth – Rise for Baby and Family

- The need for services is growing and there is not enough resources.
- In order to provide the services that are needed we are losing out in other areas

such as background administrative work.

- Cannot stretch any further.
- When families do not get the services they need, they file a complaint which requires more resources.
- Cost savings can be as much as \$8 in savings for every \$1 spent

Senator Fuller Clark – Can you explain why the case loads are increasing

Elsworth – Numbers are increasing and complexity is increasing as well. We asked workers to look at all of their cases and highlight the cases where children are not getting all of the services that they need. 25% of children would benefit from more services but we are not able to do any more than we are already doing.

Margaret Small Porter – Richie McFarland Center

- The Richie McFarland center has been around 1971.
- Funding is stretched thinner than ever before.
- Private insurance is only paying 20% of what is billed.
- The eligibility criteria for services had to be increased to further limit who is eligible for services.
- They have worked to make the center as efficient as possible but can only do so much.
- It's a very delicate balance between providing care and staying afloat.
- Have needed to spend more time on fundraising which takes away from time needed for administrative work.
- Needs to also make sure our salaries are high enough to meet the needs of new graduates in the field to make sure we are meeting the needs of our work force.

Gayle Perrault

- Has a son with autism.
- Benefits from Early Support Services are important to the parents as well as the children.
- ESS also benefits the parents because no one really knows what services are out there until you have to go out and find them.

Carrie Durant – Resident of Wolfeboro

- Has a daughter who benefited from ESS.
- The services not only have benefit for the children but for the parents.
- The support centers are also great at finding other services that the family needs.

Summary of testimony presented in opposition: None

Neutral Information Presented: None

Future Action: Ought to Pass

KRB

Date Hearing Report completed: February 9, 2017