



NH SENATE PRESS RELEASE

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Contact Name: Sara Persechino

Phone: (603) 271-3479

Email: Sara.Persechino@leg.state.nh.us

Senate Judiciary Committee Passes Omnibus Child Protection Amendment

CONCORD - Today, the Senate Judiciary Committee passed Amendment #2020-1324s to HB 1162. The amendment, sponsored by Committee Chair Martha Hennessey (D-Hanover), creates an omnibus child protection bill.

After the committee vote, Senator Martha Hennessey (D-Hanover) issued the following statement:

“We often talk about the public health and economic impacts of the coronavirus in New Hampshire. However, one of the most pressing issues we will face as a state is the protection and welfare of our children,” **Senator Martha Hennessey (D-Hanover)** stated. “For children living in abusive homes, the closure of our schools and after school programs meant their privacy and ability to disclose abuse was limited if not completely eliminated. As a Legislature, it is our duty to do everything in our power to protect our children. As the state begins to reopen, we need to be prepared to protect our children and advocate for the resources they need to be safe and successful. This includes clarifying our provisions on adoption, the authority of the Office of the Child Advocate, and putting critical health and safety programs in place for children exposed to substance use disorder, neglect, and abuse.”

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On Background:

- Amendment #2020-1324s to HB 1162 contains texts from the following bills:
 - SB 295 relative to the office of the child advocate
 - HB 1657 relative to reimbursement of court-ordered services for juveniles
 - HB 1249 relative to the legal representation of children in the juvenile justice system
 - HB 377 relative to the best interests of the child under the child protection act
 - HB 1162 relative to adoption and parentage
 - HB 1233 relative to coverage for children’s early intervention services
 - HB 1707 expanding the family-centered early supports and services (FCESS) program to children under the age of 3 who are born substance-exposed

- SB 541 relative to the child abuse and neglect central registry
- HB 1637 establishing a kinship navigator program in the department of health and human services.
- HB 1597 relative to dispositional hearings under RSA 169-B
- SB 643 relative to missing children
- SB 549 relative to the rebuttable presumption of harm under the child protection act