

Aging Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: SB-286 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT INCREASING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR GRANDPARENTS AND
Title: OTHER NONPARENT RELATIVES RAISING CERTAIN CHILDREN.

Vote Date: 3/5/2026

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/24/2026

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Aging Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This proposal would provide the same financial benefits to grandparents and other nonparent relatives who adopt their own grandchildren or children of relatives as those who adopt unrelated children.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE (IF APPLICABLE):

None applicable.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Ms. Shantelle Varrs, Deputy Commissioner, Dept. of Social Services: Given the unbudgeted cost for this program they are **opposed** to moving it forward. In 2023 a similar bill was introduced and OFA estimated that the cost would be \$16.7 million dollars. The actual cost would depend on the number of individuals impacted and the foster care rate used as the basis for the TFA payments.

Mr. Michael Werner, Lead Aging Policy Analyst, Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity: They **support** this legislation with the recommendation to implement at least 50% of the prevailing rates for fostering kinship care rates (8.35% of an estimated \$16.7 million in fiscal-year 2024 and 2025), with a commitment to full parity long-term. They recommend a phased implementation starting with a least 50% of the value of DCF prevailing foster rates. Their testimony includes a rate chart that displays the foster and kinship board and care rates used by the DCF.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

None applicable.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None applicable.

Reported by: Richard Ferrari, Assist. Clerk
Reviewed by: Elizabeth Aheart, Clerk

Date 3/11/26