**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 63‑7‑2310, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO PROTECTING AND NURTURING CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT THE GOAL OF THE STATE IS THAT NO MORE THAN TWO THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED SEVENTEEN TITLE IV‑E FUNDED CHILDREN WILL REMAIN IN FOSTER CARE FOR MORE THAN TWENTY‑FOUR MONTHS IN ANY FISCAL YEAR.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. 1. Section 63‑7‑2310(G) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“~~(G)~~ ~~To further this state’s long‑term goals and objectives on behalf of children in foster care, the Department of Social Services shall give to the General Assembly by January 15, 2000, a report of the status of the foster care system which includes improvements the department has made to ensure the safety and quality of life of South Carolina’s foster children. This report must include:~~

~~(1)~~ ~~specific standards for the training of foster parents, including the type of training which is provided;~~

~~(2)~~ ~~standards which address emergency situations affecting the maximum number of children placed in each foster home;~~

~~(3)~~ ~~standards which provide for the periodic determination of the medical condition of a child during his stay in foster care; and~~

~~(4)~~ ~~methods the department has developed to encourage the receipt of information on the needs of children in foster care from persons who have been recently emancipated from the foster care system.~~ To comply with the requirements of 42 U.S.C. Section 671(a)(14) and 45 C.F.R. Section 1356. 21(n), the goal of the State is that in any fiscal year, no more than two thousand six hundred seventeen Title IV‑E funded children will remain in foster care for more than twenty‑four months. The Department of Social Services shall develop appropriate plans for timely permanency and use appropriate data benchmarks and targets to achieve this goal.”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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