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**Healthcare Subcommittee Meeting  
January 6, 2016  
2:00 p.m.  
Room 516 - Blatt Building**

### **ARCHIVED VIDEO AVAILABLE**

- I. You may access archived video of this meeting by visiting the South Carolina General Assembly's website (<http://www.scstatehouse.gov>) and click on "Citizens' Interests," then click on "House Legislative Oversight Committee Postings and Reports." Lastly, click on "Video Archives" for a listing of archived videos for the Legislative Oversight Committee.

### **MINUTES**

- I. House Rule 4.5 requires the standing committees of the House to prepare and make available for public inspection, in compliance with Section 30-4-90, the minutes of full committee meetings. House Rule 4.5 further provides that such minutes need not be verbatim accounts of such meetings. It is the practice of the House Legislative Oversight Committee to provide minutes, which are not verbatim accounts of such meetings, for its Subcommittee meetings.
- II. The Healthcare Subcommittee (Subcommittee) meeting was called to order at 2:09 p.m. by Subcommittee Chair Nathan Ballentine on Wednesday, January 06, 2016, in Room 516 of the Blatt Building, Columbia, South Carolina. The following Subcommittee Members were present when the meeting was called to order: Subcommittee Chair Ballentine, Representative Walton J. McLeod, and Representative Bill Taylor. Representative Mia McLeod joined the meeting during public testimony.
- III. Representative Taylor moved to approve the Subcommittee minutes from its meeting on November 23, 2015. A roll call vote was held, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

<b>Rep. Taylor’s Motion to approve the Subcommittee Minutes from Nov. 23, 2015</b>	<b>Yea</b>	<b>Nay</b>	<b>Not Voting</b>
Chair Ballentine	✓		
Rep. Mia McLeod			Not Present
Rep. Walton McLeod	✓		
Rep. Taylor	✓		

- IV. This was the fifth meeting with the Department of Social Services (DSS) held to provide an opportunity for the subcommittee to receive public testimony about the Department of Social Services. Representative Ballentine explained the various methods of notification used to inform the public of this opportunity and then informed the public of a letter that the subcommittee received from Representative Pitts, expressing his concerns about DSS. Representative Ballentine reminded those present that all testimony must be given under oath, but that there are options to anonymously provide comment to the subcommittee. He emphasized that the subcommittee cannot intervene or provide resolution in any constituents’ ongoing matter with the agency, Family Court, or any judicial entity.
- V. Representative Ballentine explained that the Subcommittee would hear testimony of approximately 10 minutes from each person. Each person was sworn in individually. The italicized notation is the approximate start time for each person on the archived video (<http://www.scstatehouse.gov/video/videofeed.php>).

**Mark Cruise, CEO of Palmetto Association for Children and Families 8:00** - Representing 47 member agencies, Mr. Cruise complemented Director Alford’s interaction with people around the state. He also expressed support for budget recommendations that increase DSS staff and the interim relief settlement. Mr. Cruise also provided written testimony.

**Becky Callahan, Executive Director of Safe Harbor SC 15:48** - Safe Harbor is a domestic violence agency serving Greenville, Pickens, Oconee and Anderson Counties. Her testimony centered on DSS’ penalization of domestic violence victims for failing to protect their children. Ms. Callahan will email testimony later.

**Elizabeth McKinney, Friend of a Vulnerable Adult 33:39** - Ms. McKinney relayed a story of a vulnerable adult’s treatment by DSS. She allowed her notes to be photocopied for the committee, and stated that she would provide the subcommittee with the names of the government officials and entities that she had contacted about her friend’s case.

**Tabitha Davenport, Parent 50:10** - Ms. Davenport expressed concern about retribution from her local DSS office.

**Krystal Green, Social Worker for Columbia Urban League 1:05:19** - Ms. Green provided testimony about the Urban League’s partnership with DSS to provide employment opportunities for foster youth since 1999.

**Renee Mills, Parents Anonymous/Family Corps, Charleston County 1:12:14** - Representing a program that is in 36 counties, Ms. Mills primarily testified about mutual support parent groups. They are the contract provider of these services to DSS and she has noticed that some county offices are not aware

of their services. Her thought is that all parents should have a parent advocate with them guiding them through the process.

**Lex Cole, CEO South Carolina Youth Advocate Program (SCYAP), Richland 1:32:42** - Mr. Cole testified about the interim consent decree to move children under 6 out of group homes, and expressed a hope that the final decree will include all children under 12. He asked for different funding mechanism for therapeutic foster care.

**Morgan Roberts, Goose Creek, Student 1:55:30** - Ms. Roberts thanked the department for making resources like Parent Corps available to parents.

**Kayla Sevre, Berkeley County 2:02:00** - Ms. Sevre relayed her experience and thought that the presence of a parent advocate or guardian ad litem should be there as an uninterested party to confirm what is said.

**Cynthia Johnson, Charleston County, Disabled 2:13:00** - Ms. Johnson was a victim of domestic violence. She primarily testified about the assistance that she received from Project Unity. They get her a list of resources and helped her navigate the system.

**Patricia Lyons, Charleston County, Disabled 2:26:46** - Ms. Lyons also received assistance from Project Unity. She is a grandmother and a portion of her experience was the caseworker asked her to stop calling the state office.

**Alicia Rahiem, Domestic Violence Victim Advocate for Project Unity, Charleston, Berkeley, and Dorchester Counties 2:36:00** - Ms. Raheim testified about inconsistencies between counties, lack of knowledge about resources, and the agency’s lack of knowledge about working with domestic violence victims.

**Dorothy Barnett, Waco, TX (temporarily in Laurens County) 2:49:00** - Ms. Barnett’s testimony was suspended.

**Cheryl Soehl, Rehabilitation Counselor 2:55:00** - Ms. Soehl testified about the adversarial nature of the relationship between GALs and DSS. She discussed difficulties in obtaining case information and provided a solution.

VI. Subcommittee Chair Ballentine invited Karen Wingo to speak on behalf of DSS. There were five members of the executive team at the meeting to listen to the comments and connect with constituents about their concerns. Ms. Wingo responded to questions and stated that she would obtain responses for any questions that she could not answer.

<b>Rep. Mia McLeod’s Motion to include a statement in the Subcommittee report that there was an opportunity for the public input at the January 6, 2016 subcommittee meeting</b>	<b>Yea</b>	<b>Nay</b>	<b>Not Voting</b>
Chair Ballentine	✓		
Rep. Mia McLeod	✓		
Rep. Walton McLeod	✓		
Rep. Taylor	✓		

VII. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.