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January 26, 2016

**HAND DELIVERED and EMAIL**

Mrs. Susan Alford, State Director  
South Carolina Department of Social Services  
Post Office Box 1520  
Columbia, South Carolina 29202-1520

Dear Director Alford:

Following the January 6, 2016 subcommittee meeting, members of the subcommittee raised the questions/concerns below, based on the public's testimony. Please be prepared to discuss them at the February 3, 2016 subcommittee meeting.

- Does the agency monitor performance of the private providers it engages and incentivize the high performing providers with more referrals?
- What type of training does DSS provide on how caseworkers are supposed to interact with parents during initial investigation or at other times in the process?
- What is the agency's policy governing referrals to parent advocates (when, in what circumstance)?
  - Has the agency researched involving parent advocates at the very beginning of the investigation process? If so, please provide all information related to that analysis.
- Due to the strenuous nature of the position, does the agency utilize any type of personality test when hiring caseworkers to predict whether the stress associated with the job will negatively affect their outlooks towards children and parents?
- Does the agency conduct any type of parent/guardian survey about the process?
- Does DSS notify child protection agencies in other states when an adult, involved in an open case in SC, moves to that state?
- What is the relationship between DSS and GALs?
  - How do GALs access case files?
- What is DSS' policy on caseworker overtime related to accommodating visitation for parents whose work schedules prohibit visitation during normal business hours?
- What types of background checks are performed when a child is placed with a relative?

In addition, please be prepared to discuss a timeline for implementation of any of the agency's recommendations. Thank you for your continued cooperation during the legislative oversight process.

Sincerely,

Signature Redacted

Nathan Ballentine  
Healthcare Subcommittee Chair