

SENATE FILE NO. SF0034

Child welfare-QRTP accreditation assistance program.

Sponsored by: Joint Labor, Health & Social Services Interim
Committee

A BILL

for

1 AN ACT relating to child welfare; making legislative
2 findings; authorizing the department of family services to
3 operate a program to support care providers' accreditation
4 as qualified residential treatment programs under the
5 federal Family First Act; authorizing the use of a
6 nonprofit entity to operate the program as specified;
7 authorizing payments to be made on behalf of individual
8 care provider organizations; placing limits on payments;
9 and providing for an effective date.

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11 *Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:*

12

13 **Section 1.** The legislature finds:

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1 (a) That there are compelling health, safety and
2 financial benefits which will result from implementation of
3 the Family First and Prevention Services Act, P.L. 115-123.
4 The Act enhances the state's child welfare interests by
5 augmenting therapeutic services that promote family
6 reunification and that avoid placement of a child outside
7 the child's home. Specifically, care organizations that
8 become and remain accredited under the Act as Qualified
9 Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP) qualify for federal
10 funding and can provide children whose needs cannot be met
11 in a family setting with high quality residential treatment
12 services that help them transition back to family care.
13 QRTP services are highly beneficial to the wellbeing of
14 Wyoming's children, to the reunification and health of
15 Wyoming's families and offer a fiscally advantageous way
16 for Wyoming to meet its child welfare obligations.

17

18 (b) The costs and technical demands of becoming QRTP
19 accredited and maintaining QRTP accreditation are
20 significant. Without the availability of technical and
21 financial support, there is a significant risk that an
22 insufficient number of Wyoming's care provider
23 organizations will be QRTP accredited and Wyoming's

1 children and families will not receive the services that
2 are available through the Family First and Prevention
3 Services Act.

4

5 **Section 2.**

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7 (a) Upon legislative appropriation for the operation
8 of the program, the department of family services shall
9 promulgate reasonable rules necessary for the creation of a
10 program to provide financial and other support to
11 organizations that become accredited as qualified
12 residential treatment programs (QRTP) under the Family
13 First and Prevention Services Act, P.L. 115-123, and to
14 organizations that must maintain that accreditation. In
15 operating the program, the department may enter into an
16 agreement with a nonprofit entity to establish and operate
17 the program and the nonprofit entity or the department
18 shall:

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20 (i) Provide technical assistance to organizations
21 that engage in the process of becoming QRTP accredited or
22 who must maintain QRTP accreditation;

23

1 (ii) Provide payments directly to a QRTP
2 accrediting body on behalf of an organization that becomes
3 QRTP accredited or is seeking to maintain QRTP
4 accreditation but payments shall not exceed fifty percent
5 (50%) of the fees charged by the accrediting body for QRTP
6 accreditation;

7

8 (iii) Pursuant to standards adopted by the
9 department, provide payments directly to other persons on
10 behalf of an organization that becomes QRTP accredited or
11 who seeks continuing QRTP accreditation for up to fifty
12 percent (50%) of the value of services rendered by those
13 persons that were reasonably necessary to obtain
14 accreditation or to retain accreditation.

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16 (b) Rules promulgated pursuant to subsection (a) of
17 this section shall provide reasonable eligibility standards
18 for the organizations who apply to receive program benefits
19 and shall provide a method for applying for program
20 benefits. The rules also shall define circumstances under
21 which an organization receiving benefits shall be required
22 to repay those benefits, including circumstances where the
23 organization does not satisfy its financial obligations,

1 does not become QRTP accredited, does not maintain QRTP
2 accreditation for a reasonable period of time, or does not
3 provide an established quantity of relevant services in
4 Wyoming.

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6 (c) The legislature may appropriate funds to the
7 department of family services to implement the program
8 authorized by subsection (a) of this section. No funds
9 appropriated by the legislature shall be distributed by the
10 department to any nonprofit entity with whom the department
11 has entered into an agreement to operate a program until
12 the nonprofit entity has contributed to the program an
13 amount equal to any amounts that it will distribute as
14 direct payments under paragraphs (a)(ii) and (iii) of this
15 section. The department shall ensure that state funds and
16 funds the nonprofit entity provides to the program shall be
17 accounted for separately.

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19 (d) Any agreement entered into between the department
20 of family services and any nonprofit entity shall require
21 annual reporting by the nonprofit entity to the department.

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1 (e) No program shall be operated under the authority
2 provided by this section until the program is reviewed by
3 the attorney general's office for compliance with Wyoming
4 law.

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6 **Section 3.** There is appropriated forty-five thousand
7 dollars (\$45,000.00) from the general fund to the
8 department of family services for the purpose of operating
9 the program authorized in section 2 of this act and
10 providing funds to any nonprofit entity retained pursuant
11 to section 2 of this act. This appropriation shall be for
12 the period beginning with the effective date of this act
13 and ending June 30, 2022. This appropriation shall not be
14 transferred or expended for any other purpose and any
15 unexpended, unobligated funds remaining from this
16 appropriation shall revert as provided by law on June 30,
17 2022.

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1 **Section 4.** This act is effective immediately upon
2 completion of all acts necessary for a bill to become law
3 as provided by Article 4, Section 8 of the Wyoming
4 Constitution.

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(END)