

FINANCIAL IMPACT OF THE HANNAH'S LAW INITIATIVE

FINANCIAL IMPACT – CANNOT BE DETERMINED

OVERVIEW

The Initiative Petition, known as Hannah's Law, proposes to amend Nevada Revised Statutes pertaining to the investigation of child abuse in the state of Nevada. The Initiative establishes several guidelines, including the use of a multi-disciplinary team approach by all state and local agencies and law enforcement entities in the investigation and prosecution of child abuse cases. The Initiative further requires law enforcement agencies to conform to procedures established by the U.S. Department of Justice regarding the investigation of child abuse.

All agencies would be required to establish written protocols for use in all child abuse investigations and every law enforcement agency in Nevada would be required to employ a specified composition of specially trained personnel to investigate child abuse cases. The Initiative also establishes provisions for state and local agencies and law enforcement entities that are unable to meet these requirements.

FINANCIAL IMPACT OF THE INITIATIVE

The Initiative mandates certain practices that are currently authorized in statute or may be currently used by state and local agencies and law enforcement entities in the investigation of child abuse cases. For example, the Initiative requires that: (1) multi-disciplinary teams investigate child abuse cases; (2) law enforcement agencies employ male and female personnel specially trained in the investigation of child abuse cases; (3) law enforcement officers provide referrals to resources within the community related to therapy, victim compensation and other services available to families and victims of child abuse; and (4) law enforcement agencies follow guidelines set forth in the Portable Guides to Investigating Child Abuse, published by the U.S. Department of Justice.

In some instances, but not all, the requirements of the Initiative may already reflect current practices; to the extent that they do, there would be no financial impact. To the extent that the requirements of the Initiative impose new or additional duties or require additional actions by state or local agencies or law enforcement entities, there would be a financial impact. It is not possible, however, to identify readily those instances in which the requirements of the Initiative would impose new or additional duties or require additional action with regard to investigating child abuse cases. Thus, the financial impact of this Initiative on state and local government entities cannot be determined with any degree of certainty.

Prepared by the Fiscal Analysis Division of the Legislative Counsel Bureau – August 24, 2006