

**Government of the District of Columbia
Office of the Chief Financial Officer**



Natwar M. Gandhi
Chief Financial Officer

TO: The Honorable Vincent C. Gray
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

FROM: Natwar M. Gandhi
Chief Financial Officer

DATE: May 9, 2007

SUBJECT: Fiscal Impact Statement: "Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention
Amendment Act of 2007"

REFERENCE: Draft Bill - No Number Available

Conclusion

Funds are sufficient in the FY 2007 and the proposed FY 2008 through FY 2011 budget and financial plan to implement the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Amendment Act of 2007.

Background

The proposed legislation would amend the child protection provisions of Title 16 of the District of Columbia Official Code to facilitate compliance by the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) with the Title's shelter care hearing requirements.

Specifically, the proposed legislation would require the shelter care hearing to commence not later than three days-- rather than 72 hours-- after a child has been taken into custody and to permit the Child and Family Services Agency to hold a family team meeting within the three-day period prior to the hearing. The proposed legislation would also give the courts the authority to order a trial home visit for a child in foster care with his or her parents to ease the child and parent's transition to permanent reunification and reduce the risk of the child's re-entry into foster care.

In addition, the proposed legislation would amend the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect Act of 1977 to provide the Director of the Child and Family Services Agency with the authority to refer low and moderate risk cases to the Healthy Family Thriving Communities Collaborative (HFTCC) to meet the permanency and safety goals of the Adoption and Safe Families Act. HFTCCs are the Agency's primary vehicle for neighborhood-based child welfare services. The

Financial Plan Impact

Funds are sufficient in the FY 2007 and the proposed FY 2008 through FY 2011 budget and financial plan to implement the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Amendment Act of 2007. CFSA currently refers cases to HFTCCs based on the availability of its annual appropriations; this practice would continue under the proposed legislation.