A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE CONTINUATION OF THE WORK OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES REGIONAL SUPERVISION AND COLLABORATION WORKING GROUP AND MAKING CHANGES TO THE MEMBERSHIP, REPORTING, AND TERMINATION DATES FOR THE CHILD WELL-BEING TRANSFORMATION COUNCIL.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Part I of S.L. 2017-41 reads as rewritten:

"SECTION 1.1. Regional Supervision of and Collaboration by Local Social Services Programs. –

... (3) The Department shall submit the plan to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services by November 15, 2018. The plan shall provide for the system of regional supervision to be operational no later than March 1, 2020, 2022. The Department shall not implement the plan without an act by the General Assembly.

"SECTION 1.2. Social Services Regional Supervision and Collaboration Working Group. – The School of Government at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (SOG) shall continue the work of the Social Services Regional Supervision and Collaboration Working Group (Working Group) to make recommendations to the Department regarding the regional supervision and collaboration plan. The Working Group shall consist of the currently constituted members as of December 1, 2018.

"SECTION 1.2.(b) Composition. – The Working Group shall consist of the following members:

(1) Three members of the Senate appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, one of whom shall be designated as a cochair.

(2) Three members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be designated as a cochair.

... 

"SECTION 1.2.(d) Duties. – The Working Group shall continue to develop recommendations for the regional supervision and collaboration plan required by Section 1.1 of this act. The Working Group shall divide its work into two stages, the first to (i) address regional supervision and the second to (ii) address interagency collaboration and regionalization.

(1) Stage One. – The Working Group shall convene its first meeting no later than October 6, 2017. During the first stage, the Working Group shall develop October 4, 2019, and continue developing recommendations regarding:
a. The size, number, and location of the regions. Recommendations shall take into consideration (i) the need for regions to maintain direct, local connections with the jurisdictions they serve; (ii) alignment with other regional organizations that intersect with the work of social services, as appropriate; and (iii) awareness of the cultural differences and similarities between regions.

b. The allocation of responsibility between the central, regional, and local officials in supervising and administering the social services programs and services.

c. Methods for holding the regional offices accountable for performance and responsiveness.

d. Requirements for the regional offices to share information about local departmental performance with the relevant board or boards of county commissioners, county or regional board of social services, or consolidated human services board.

e. Options for authorizing the board of county commissioners to intervene in urgent situations to assume direct control of the department of social services at the local level prior to the State assuming control of service delivery pursuant to G.S. 108A-74.

f. Any other issues related to regional supervision identified by the cochairs.

(2) Stage Two. – During the second stage, the Working Group shall:

a. Develop recommendations regarding legislative and regulatory changes necessary to improve collaboration between counties in the administration of social services programs and services. Recommendations shall address, at a minimum, information sharing, conflicts of interest, and intercounty movement of people enrolled in programs or receiving social services.

b. Develop a vision for transitioning the State from a county-administered system to a regionally administered system. The vision shall identify general benefits and challenges associated with making such a transition.

(3) Stage Three. – After completing the work in Stages One and Two, the Working Group shall:

a. Review the recommendations from the Center for the Support of Families and the Department. After reviewing both reports, the Working Group shall revise the Stage One recommendations regarding regional supervision.

b. Provide more detailed recommendations regarding the following:

1. The role of local elected officials and social services governing boards in social services oversight.

2. Legal representation of local social services agencies.

3. Managing conflicts of interest.

4. Determining residency for social services programs and services.

5. Transferring and changing venue in adult guardianship cases.

6. Notice requirements for adult guardianship cases.

7. Confidentiality of social services records, as it relates to improving interagency collaboration and service delivery.

"SECTION 1.2.(e) Reports. –
Stage One. – The Working Group shall submit a report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services (Committee) and the Department at the conclusion of Stage One, which shall be no later than April 15, 2018. After receiving the Stage One report, the Committee may terminate the Working Group if it concludes that the Working Group is not making sufficient progress.

Stage Two. – The Working Group shall submit a report to the Committee and the Department at the conclusion of Stage Two, which shall be no later than February 1, 2019.

Stage Three. – The Working Group shall submit a preliminary report to the Committee no later than October 15, 2020, providing an update on its continued work. After receiving the preliminary report, the Committee may terminate the Working Group if it concludes the Working Group is not making sufficient progress. The Working Group shall submit a final report of its recommendations to the Committee no later than February 1, 2021, and shall terminate upon the final report.

SECTION 2. Section 24.1 of S.L. 2018-5 reads as rewritten:

"SECTION 24.1.(a) Article 82 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes is repealed.

"SECTION 24.1.(c) Membership. – The Children's Council shall be located administratively in the General Assembly. The Children's Council shall consist of 25 members. In making appointments, each appointing authority shall select members who have appropriate experience and knowledge of the issues to be examined by the Children's Council and shall strive to ensure members are appointed who represent the geographical, political, gender, and racial diversity of this State. The Children's Council members shall be appointed on or after September 1, 2018, as follows:

(1) Six members shall be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, as follows:

... One at-large member.

"SECTION 24.1.(c1) Removal. – A member of the Children's Council may be removed by the cochairs from the Council if the member fails to attend at least fifty percent (50%) of the meetings held in accordance with subsection (e) of this section during a year.

"SECTION 24.1.(i) Reporting; Termination. – By June 30, 2019, the Children's Council shall submit an interim report to the chairs of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services, the chairs of the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services, the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services, and the Fiscal Research Division. The report shall include a summary of the Council's work for the previous year, any findings and recommendations for change, and a work plan for the upcoming year. By June 30, 2020, the Children's Council shall submit a final report and shall terminate on that date.

SECTION 3. This act is effective when it becomes law.