ENGROSSED SENATE
JOINT
RESOLUTION NO. 9

By: Leftwich of the Senate

and

Mitchell of the House

A Joint Resolution relating to the Department of Human Services; creating the Department of Human Services Staffing Task Force until certain date; providing for membership, appointment of members, vacancies, quorum, travel reimbursement, convening of the first meeting and appointment of officers; specifying duties; allowing solicitation of certain information; requiring a report; providing for noncodification; and providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, the Department of Human Services is presently experiencing exceptionally high turnover rates among staff. Additionally, recent reductions in the numbers of support staff positions have resulted in personnel having to assume new duties and to accept increased caseloads; and

WHEREAS, the need to determine what constitutes a manageable caseload and, based on this determination, to establish worker-to-caseload ratios within the Department such that workers are not expected to work beyond their capabilities is essential to the Department's continued ability to meet its mission of serving Oklahoma communities with quality and efficient services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE 1ST SESSION OF THE 47TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law not to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes reads as follows:

A. There is hereby created, to continue until November 1, 2000, the Department of Human Services Staffing Task Force. The Task Force shall be composed of seven (7) members as follows:

1. Two employees of the Department who work directly with clients, appointed by the Director of Human Services, one of whom shall be a representative of an organization which represents the interests of employees of the Department;

2. Two employees of the Department, appointed by the Director, who serve as unit supervisors;

3. The Director of Human Service, or a designee; and

4. The chair of the Human Resources Committee of the Senate and the chair of the Human Services Committee of the House of Representatives, or their designees.

B. 1. Members shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority. A vacancy on the Task Force shall be filled by the original appointing authority.

2. A majority of the members present at a meeting shall constitute a quorum.

3. Members shall not be compensated for their service but shall be reimbursed by their appointing authorities for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties, pursuant to the provisions of the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

C. 1. The Task Force shall review the worker-to-caseload ratio for staff of the Department, and other staffing related issues. On or before November 1, 2000, the Task Force shall make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature regarding what constitutes a manageable caseload, and the viability of establishing maximum worker-to-caseload ratios as a means of addressing the issue of understaffing.

2. The Task Force may solicit and accept written comments, recommendations and proposals from employees of the Department and the public.

D. The chairs of the legislative committees shall convene the first meeting of the Task Force by December 1, 1999, and shall

jointly appoint a chair, vice-chair and secretary of the Task Force. The Task Force shall meet not less than quarterly.

SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 1999.

Passed the Senate the 8th day of March, 1999.

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President of the Senate

Passed the House of Representatives the ____ day of _____ , 1999.

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Speaker of the House of Representatives