

One Hundred Seventh Legislature - Second Session - 2022

Introducer's Statement of Intent

LB932

Chairperson: Senator John Arch

Committee: Health and Human Services

Date of Hearing: January 28, 2022

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

LB 932 is the product of interim study LR 198, which examined the State's practice of intercepting Social Security benefits intended for foster children. The bill would require the Department of Health and Human Services to:

- Screen all youth in its care for Social Security eligibility, with informed consent from the youth or their guardian ad litem;
- Use or conserve the Social Security benefits in the child's best interest, and hold them in a trust account, separate from the Department's own funds;
- Conserve a portion of funds for the youth, that cannot be used to reimburse the state for the cost of the youth's care;
- Maintain itemized records for each account, and provide the child or any party to their case with access to this information or funds in the account if it is in the child's best interest; and
- Keep the youth and their guardian ad litem informed about any communications from the Social Security Administration regarding the child's benefits, as well as information about the receipt, use and conservation of the child's benefits.

This bill will ensure that there is transparency and accountability in the State's management of foster youths' Social Security benefits, and protect some of the funds for the youth so that they have a savings they can access as they enter adulthood.

Principal Introducer: _____

Senator Megan Hunt