

**JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE STUDYING THE COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES
ACT AND COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES FOR AT-RISK YOUTH AND
FAMILIES PROGRAM**

October 31, 2006

The first meeting of the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Comprehensive Services Act and the Comprehensive Services for At-Risk Youth and Families Program met Tuesday, October 31 at 2:00 p.m. in Senate Room A of the General Assembly Building.

Election of the Chairman and Vice Chairman

Senator Hanger was unanimously elected Chairman of the joint subcommittee. In absentia, Delegate Hamilton was unanimously elected Vice Chairman of the joint subcommittee.

Initial Staff Report - SJR 96

Staff made a brief initial report on SJR 96 (2006).

Senate Joint Resolution 96 establishes the joint subcommittee to study the cost effectiveness of the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA) and Comprehensive Services for At-Risk Youth and Families Program (Program) and to collaborate with JLARC regarding its evaluation of the administration of the Comprehensive Services Act. The joint subcommittee is composed of two members of the Senate appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules and four members of the House of Delegates appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates; one non-legislative citizen member appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; two non-legislative citizen members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates; the Commissioner of Social Services or his designee; and the Director of the Department of Planning and Budget or his designee. The Commissioner of Social Services or his designee, and the Director of the Department of Planning and Budget or his designee shall serve ex officio with voting privileges.

Pursuant to SJR 96, the study shall be conducted in two phases. In the first phase of the study, during the 2006 interim, the joint subcommittee shall (i) review the administration of the CSA by state and local governments, including projections of caseloads, service needs and costs, and quality of services provided, and (ii) make recommendations for improvement of program services and strategies for cost containment. At the same time, JLARC is charged, pursuant to HJR 60 (2006) (Nixon) with completing a comprehensive study of the CSA and the Program. During the second phase of the study, during the 2007 interim, JLARC shall brief the joint subcommittee regarding its findings and shall assist the joint subcommittee in developing recommendations relative to collective findings and assessments regarding the administration of the CSA and the cost effectiveness of the Program. The joint subcommittee shall ultimately develop appropriate recommendations in consultation with JLARC. Throughout the process, the joint subcommittee and JLARC shall work collaboratively, to minimize duplication and fragmentation.

The joint subcommittee is limited to four (4) meetings in the 2006 interim and four (4) meetings in the 2007 interim. Meetings shall be concluded no later than November 30 of each year, and the chairman of the joint subcommittee and the chairman of JLARC shall individually submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of their findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the next regular session of the General Assembly for each year. Direct costs of the study shall not exceed \$7,700 for each year without special approval as set out in the resolution. Of this amount, an estimated \$500 is allocated for speakers, materials, etc.

Virginia's Comprehensive Services Act and Comprehensive Services for At-Risk Youth and Families Program - Ms. Kim McGaughey, Executive Director, Office of Comprehensive Services

Ms. Kim McGaughey, Executive Director of the Office of Comprehensive Services presented an overview of Virginia's Comprehensive Services Act and Comprehensive Services for At-Risk Youth and Families Program. Ms. McGaughey discussed the impetus for the CSA and the CSA statutory framework. She then provided overview of the demographics of the population served, the services provided, and annual program expenditures. Additionally, Ms. McGaughey discussed major challenges faced by the CSA and the Comprehensive Services for At-Risk Youth and Families Program. These included ensuring access to appropriate community services and creating an array of community services. Ms. McGaughey offered several key initiatives intended to meet these challenges, including:

- Expanding community expertise in serving children with serious emotional and behavioral problems
- Expanding service for families, and in schools and communities to prevent placements in more restrictive settings
- Returning children from residential placements, or keeping children out of residential placements, who can be served effectively in homes, schools and communities
- Eliminating the need for families to relinquish custody of children in order to access behavioral health services
- Creating one system of care for "mandated" and "non-mandated" children, regardless of which agency "door" they walk through
- Improving results and performance accountability with CSA by implementing CSA performance measures, strengthening the role of Community Policy and Management teams, and increasing CSA administrative funds for communities

The CSA: Problems and Solutions - Dr. Brian Meyer, Executive Director, Virginia Treatment Center for Children and Chairman, Child and Family Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee

Dr. Brian Meyer, Executive Director of the Virginia Treatment Center for Children and Chairman of the Child and Family Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee offered a presentation on problems associated with the CSA and potential solutions. Dr. Meyer identified several strengths of the CSA, including:

- Pools funds to serve children.
- Utilizes systems of care where services and providers work together to help troubled and at-risk children and their families.
- Local community teams decide what is best for their children.
- Provides flexible use of funds, allowing children to receive services that public and private insurance do not fund.

Dr. Meyer then noted several problems associated with the CSA:

- The CSA does not serve much of its target population.
- The current funding formula, created in 1994 and based on locality population and need, as measured by poverty, creates inequity.
- The current model includes an insufficient number of community-based and intermediate level services, with too great reliance upon residential care.

In response to these problems, Dr. Meyer offered six specific recommendations:

- The Office of Comprehensive Services should to continue to work to return CSA to its original intent of serving troubled and at-risk children.
- The Office of Comprehensive Services should officially eliminate the distinction between mandated and non-mandated children.
- The General Assembly should require that the CSA funding formula be recalculated after each decennial census.
- The General Assembly should provide an amount equal to 2.5% of total CSA expenditures to help start up new community-based services, particularly intermediate-level services.
- The General Assembly should authorize the Office of Comprehensive Services to use CSA funds flexibly, to help start up new community-based services (for example, to allow several communities to pool their funds to start up a service that none could fund individually).
- The General Assembly should fund four child psychiatry fellowship and four child psychology internship slots with payback provisions to work in underserved areas in Virginia at a cost of \$493,000 annually.

Presentation - Evaluation of Children's Residential Services Delivered Through the Comprehensive Services Act: SJR 96 Subcommittee Briefing - Nathalie Molliet Ribet, Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission.

Ms. Nathalie Molliet-Ribet presented an overview of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission's study of children's residential services delivered through the Comprehensive Services Act, pursuant to House Joint Resolution 60 and in conjunction with the joint subcommittee pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution 96. Ms. Molliet-Ribet discussed the scope, activities and topics of the final report, which will be released on December 11, 2006.

Data for the study was collected through site visits to 17 localities, surveys of every local CSA coordinator, every local Community and Policy Management Team, case managers of 360 CSA participants and all Virginia residential providers, site visits and meetings

with residential providers, financial analyses of residential facilities, and analyses of licensing compliance data and residential program characteristics. The final report will include findings and recommendations related to:

- factors affecting residential expenditures, including availability of lower cost, community-based alternatives to residential care, adequacy of local infrastructure to secure the most cost effective services, and effectiveness of markets in controlling rates of residential facilities;
- adequacy of licensing standards and regulatory enforcement, to ensure that quality services are provided, including the adequacy of licensing standards to ensure health and safety of children and the effectiveness of regulatory agencies in enforcing compliance with licensing standards;
- importance of tracking child outcomes, including current availability of information to measure the impact of the CSA program.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Subcommittee Studying the Comprehensive Services Act and the Comprehensive Services for At-Risk Youth and Families Program will be November 22, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. in Senate Room A of the General Assembly Building.