



STATE OF ARIZONA

JANICE K. BREWER  
GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

April 30, 2014

The Honorable Ken Bennett  
Secretary of State  
1700 West Washington  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Re: Senate Bill 1386 (supplemental appropriation; external CPS review)

Dear Secretary Bennett,

Today, I vetoed Senate Bill 1386, which would have appropriated \$250,000 to the Arizona Department of Administration to contract with a consultant to analyze Arizona's current child safety system. While I appreciate the premise of Senate Bill 1386, the substance of the bill should be a part of the broader child safety reform discussions and considered in the upcoming special session.

Over the past five months I have intentionally engaged external experts in the reform of our child safety system. Specifically, I established an independent child welfare examination team (CARE Team) to intervene in the investigation of previously "not investigated" cases – and to examine the prior child protective services system to identify areas of concern, including consideration of personnel, operations, processes, and policies. The CARE Team completed that review and submitted comprehensive recommendations in January that are currently being implemented.

I also tasked the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) with conducting an administrative review of the process that led to the over 6,500 cases that were not investigated. DPS recently completed its work and the report has further informed administrative action and reforms. Additionally, in January, I signed an Executive Order that created a cabinet-level child safety and family services division. I also called for the establishment of a stand-alone child safety and family services agency.

It is well known that my administration has been working with members of the Legislature and stakeholders to develop legislation to create the new agency. Part of that work has been interweaving accountability and transparency mechanisms into the design of a new agency, including an annual performance review by an external entity and the creation of an inspections bureau. The inspections bureau will ensure that department policies and procedures

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are followed by all staff in accordance with federal and state law and will provide ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the agency's programs and services in an effort to continuously improve the practices of the department.

Division of Child Safety and Family Services Director Charles Flanagan has been diligent in seeking input from community groups, stakeholders, families affected by the child welfare system, and local, state, and national subject-matter experts in the development of a new child safety and family services agency. As a result of that engagement, Director Flanagan has already begun instituting new reforms that reflect stakeholder feedback, best practices, and innovation.

Given the reality of limited resources and staff capacity, it is important to consider all the child welfare reforms comprehensively. These concerns are among the primary reasons I vetoed Senate Bill 1386.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janice K. Brewer". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Janice K. Brewer  
Governor

cc: The Honorable Andy Biggs  
The Honorable Andy Tobin