

**KERRY A. BENNINGHOFF, MEMBER**  
**171<sup>ST</sup> LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT**

- 41B EAST WING  
PO BOX 202171  
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-2171  
PHONE: (717) 783-1918  
FAX: (717) 260-6528
- 140 W. HIGH STREET  
BELLEFONTE, PA 16823  
PHONE: (814) 355-1300  
FAX: (814) 355-3523
- 77 N. MAIN STREET  
PO BOX 592  
REEDSVILLE, PA 17084  
PHONE: (717) 667-2319  
FAX: (717) 667-6025



**House of Representatives**  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Harrisburg

**COMMITTEES**

FINANCE COMMITTEE  
MAJORITY CHAIRMAN  
HEALTH COMMITTEE  
POLICY COMMITTEE  
REPUBLICAN INFRASTRUCTURE TASK FORCE

**CAUCUSES**

RURAL HEALTH CAUCUS  
CHAIRMAN

E-MAIL: [kbenning@pahousegop.com](mailto:kbenning@pahousegop.com)  
WEB: [kerrybenninghoff.com](http://kerrybenninghoff.com)

Rep. Benninghoff remarks  
House Children and Youth Committee  
House Bill 2295  
June 20, 2012

Good morning:

Thank you Chairwomen Harper and Bishop and committee members for hosting this hearing on House Bill 2295. HB 2295 addresses growing concerns in contractual agreements with private providers who do a tremendous job in providing mandated services to children in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Unfortunately, many of these private organizations have struggled over the years with low reimbursement rates that do not cover actual costs of services while many others have experienced waiting periods of many months or a year to receive payment for services.

Some of these providers have burned up any reserve dollars they may have had, borrowed money with interest and taken mortgages out on their personal houses to meet payroll.

I believe as a Commonwealth working with our partners at the county level we can do better!

My bill would:

- Require that payment rates cover the cost of service delivery, if providers can document that the costs are reasonable;
- Allow for the continuation of services at the last contracted rate, when a contract expires;
- Require payment within 30 days of receiving an invoice, or 1% interest will be charged per month; and

- Require DPW to convene a rate-methodology task force to develop a protocol and guidelines in order to calculate the actual cost of services purchased.

Additionally, my bill would clarify the purpose of the language in the Public Welfare Code that provides for children and youth. Generally speaking:

- We want to protect children from abuse and neglect, but preserve families wherever possible.
- We want to avoid placing a child outside the home, whenever possible. When placement is necessary, children should be placed with kin or in family foster care, instead of congregate care or institutional settings.
- For delinquent children, we want to place them in the least restrictive setting that balances the need for the protection of the public and the rehabilitative needs of the child.

Finally, to ensure quality continuity of care and services and hope for the future of our vulnerable young citizens, my bill would allow counties to receive reimbursement from DPW for the cost of educational programs to catch delinquent and dependent children up to grade level or provide career and technical training, if these programs are not otherwise available through traditional basic education.