

STATE OF NEW YORK

8131

IN SENATE

June 8, 2006

Introduced by Sen. MEIER -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Rules

AN ACT to amend the social services law, in relation to the authority of the office of children and family services to conduct a public education campaign relating to child abuse

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

- 1 Section 1. Section 20 of the social services law is amended by adding
2 a new subdivision 7 to read as follows:
3 7. To the extent appropriations are available, the office of children
4 and family services shall conduct a public education campaign that
5 emphasizes zero tolerance for child abuse and maltreatment. Such
6 campaign shall include information about the signs and symptoms of child
7 abuse and maltreatment, the hotline available to report child abuse and
8 maltreatment, and services that are available to assist families with
9 underlying issues that may lead to child abuse and maltreatment includ-
10 ing, but not limited to, substance abuse services, domestic violence
11 services, mental health services for adults and services to assist fami-
12 lies with children in need of mental health treatment. Such campaign may
13 include, but not be limited to, educational and informational materials
14 in print, audio, video, electronic and other media and public service
15 announcements and advertisements.
16 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

LBD16973-02-6

NEW YORK STATE SENATE INTRODUCER'S MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT submitted in accordance with Senate Rule VI. Sec 1

BILL NUMBER: S8131

SPONSOR: MEIER

TITLE OF BILL:

An act to amend the social services law, in relation to the authority of

the office of children and family services to conduct a public education campaign relating to child abuse

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this bill is to increase community awareness of the indicators of child abuse and maltreatment and resources to prevent such abuse and maltreatment.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS:

Section one would require the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) to conduct a public education campaign that emphasizes zero tolerance for child abuse and maltreatment which would include information about the signs and symptoms of child abuse and maltreatment, information about the Child Abuse Hotline, and information about services available to assist families with substance abuse, domestic violence and mental health needs. Information would be provided in print, audio, video, electronic and other media and public service announcements and advertisements. Section two provides for an immediate enactment date.

JUSTIFICATION:

Recent events triggered public hearings regarding the oversight and accountability of the child welfare system. This is just one legislative initiative developed in response to testimony provided at the hearings. Child abuse and maltreatment impacts every neighborhood and community. It is often difficult for neighbors and community members to identify abuse or maltreatment and even more difficult to know how to help. This bill provides the necessary information and tools to the citizens of New York State to enable them to recognize when a child may be being abused or maltreated, how to report child abuse through the Child Abuse Hotline and what services are available in their communities to prevent further abuse or maltreatment.

PRIOR LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

New bill.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

Unknown.

EFFECTIVE DATE:

Immediately.
