

UNOFFICIAL COPY OF SENATE BILL 368
EMERGENCY BILL

O4

5lr2799
CF 5lr1362

By: **Senator Kasemeyer**

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2005

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Adoption - Placement Services for Children in Public Foster Care - State**
3 **Contracts with Private Licensed Child Placement Agencies**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Department of Human Resources to allocate not
5 less than a certain amount of money from the Department's fiscal year 2005
6 budget appropriations to develop, implement, and monitor a program though
7 which qualified licensed child placement agencies may enter into contracts with
8 the State to provide adoption placement services for Maryland children in public
9 foster care who have no identified permanency resource; making this Act an
10 emergency measure; and generally relating to the placement of children in
11 public foster care in permanent adoption arrangements.

12 Preamble

13 WHEREAS, There are approximately 500 Maryland children in public foster
14 care waiting to be adopted for whom there are no families currently identified as
15 being available to adopt them; and

16 WHEREAS, Many children in Maryland foster care have been waiting for more
17 than 5 years to be placed for adoption; and

18 WHEREAS, Adoption presents the best opportunity for permanency when
19 children in public foster care are unable to be safely raised by their birth families; and

20 WHEREAS, There are many licensed private child placement agencies within
21 and outside of Maryland that have the knowledge, expertise, and ability to place
22 children for adoption who are in public foster care; and

23 WHEREAS, There are many families in Maryland who are adopting children in
24 public foster care from other states that provide financial assistance to adoption
25 agencies to help defray the costs of their services; and

26 WHEREAS, The State of Maryland does not currently make financial resources
27 available to licensed private child placement agencies to enable those agencies to
28 place children from public foster care for adoption; now, therefore,

1 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
2 MARYLAND, That the Department of Human Resources shall allocate not less than
3 \$500,000 from the Department's fiscal year 2005 budget appropriations to develop,
4 implement, and monitor a program through which qualified licensed child placement
5 agencies may enter into contracts with the State to provide adoption placement
6 services for Maryland children in public foster care who have no identified
7 permanency resource.

8 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act is an
9 emergency measure, is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health
10 or safety, has been passed by a yeas and nays vote supported by three-fifths of all the
11 members elected to each of the two Houses of the General Assembly, and shall take
12 effect from the date it is enacted.