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To: The Honorable Luke Clippinger
Chair, Judiciary Committee

From: Hannibal G. Williams II Kemerer
Chief Counsel, Legislative Affairs, Office of the Attorney General

Re: SB0214 – Child Abuse and Neglect – Disclosure of Reports and Records – **Letter of Support**

The Office of the Attorney General urges the Judiciary Committee to favorably report Senate Bill 214. Senate Bill 214 expands the authority of the Department of Human Services (“Department”) to disclose child abuse and neglect reports to school personnel, childcare facilities, and child placement agencies. The bill would permit the Department to notify schools and childcare facilities regarding incidents involving child abuse or neglect by personnel, regardless of maltreatment type or whether the child attends the specific school system or childcare facility. The bill would also permit the Department to notify child placement agencies of abuse or neglect that occurs in the licensed foster home.

Senate Bill 214 aims to prevent further child abuse or neglect following a report of abuse or neglect that involves a foster child, a school student, or a child in a childcare facility. The bill would permit the Department to disclose reports of child abuse to school systems and childcare facilities alleged to have been committed by their personnel to carry out appropriate personnel actions to protect other children during the pendency of, and upon the conclusion, of the Department’s investigation. The bill would also permit the Department to notify child placement agencies of abuse or neglect that occurs in a licensed foster home so that the agency may take protective measures to mitigate the risk of further abuse or neglect to any child in that home.

For all of the foregoing reasons, the Office of the Attorney General urges the Committee to favorably report Senate Bill 214.

cc: Judiciary Committee Members