

Testimony
Senate Bill 2112 - Department of Human Services
Judiciary Committee
Senator Judy Lee, Chairman

January 9, 2019

Chairman Lee and members of the Judiciary Committee, I am Julie Hoffman, Administrator of Adoption Services for the Department of Human Services (Department). I appear today to support passage of Senate Bill 2112.

Senate Bill 2112 was submitted at the request of the Department in order to allow medical professionals in addition to a licensed physician to diagnose a child at high risk for a physical, emotional or mental disability for the purposes of adoption assistance. These additional medical professionals would include a physician's assistant or an advanced practice registered nurse.

Many children today receive their primary care in clinics which use physicians' assistants or advanced practice registered nurses to provide ongoing preventative and regular care. In such cases, the statute currently does not allow for such professionals to make this diagnosis. If the child would not meet any of the other special need criteria, it may then make that child ineligible for adoption subsidy supports, including medical assistance. In the case of very young children being placed for adoption who may have a maternal history of alcohol or drug usage in utero, these physical, mental or emotional difficulties may not surface till later in their childhood. In such cases, the diagnosis of high risk is helpful in providing the subsidy supports a family may later require to assist in meeting the child's needs. Allowing additional medical professionals who regularly see these children for care to make this diagnosis is supported by the Department.

This concludes my testimony, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.