

An act regarding families and children in need of assistance

S.D1693 SENATOR KENNEDY / HD.2453 REPRESENTATIVE MENDES
LEAD: OFFICE OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE

What problem does this bill address?

- Preventing youth and families becoming more deeply involved with systems such as the courts, child welfare, and juvenile justice.
- Research suggests that **juvenile court involvement for truancy often fails to address the root causes of absenteeism** and can lead to negative educational and social outcomes.

*A case file review by the OCA found that **20% of Youth with a CRA Petition received no services or supports.** (CFJJ, 2022)*

Research suggests that **CRA interventions may:**



Perpetuate racial disparities

Increase school dropout rates

Escalate future delinquency

This bill will:

- Require schools to refer students to FRCs **no fewer than 45 business days prior to CRA filing**
- Require schools to **obtain an attestation** from the FRC indicating that the family has been referred for services, and that **community based resources have been exhausted**
- Require the **OCA to prepare educational materials about community-based alternatives to filing a CRA and the potential adverse outcomes of becoming involved in state systems** and make this publicly available on the CRA section of the website for the juvenile court. Require that all individuals filing a CRA petition attest to having watched the video prior to filing a CRA petition.