

ASSEMBLY, No. 1495

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 5, 1996

By Assemblyman AZZOLINA

1 AN ACT establishing pilot community coalitions to address the needs
2 and concerns of grandparents raising their grandchildren and
3 making an appropriation therefor.

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5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*

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8 1. The Commissioner of Human Services shall provide funding to
9 five counties for a pilot project to establish broad-based community
10 coalitions to address the needs and concerns of grandparents raising
11 their grandchildren. The five counties shall be: Atlantic, Essex,
12 Mercer, Middlesex and Monmouth. The Division of Youth and Family
13 Services in the Department of Human Services shall provide such
14 assistance as may be required and as may be available for the purposes
15 of carrying out the duties of the community coalitions under this act.

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17 2. a. Each community coalition shall be comprised of 11 members,
18 who shall be appointed by the county governing body. Membership in
19 the community coalition shall include representatives from community
20 agencies, law enforcement, and the courts, and from the fields of
21 health, housing, child care, substance abuse and education. The
22 community coalition shall also include grandparents raising their
23 grandchildren.

24 b. The community coalitions shall organize as soon as possible
25 after the appointment of their members.

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27 3. The goal of the community coalition shall be to:

28 a. Identify the needs of grandparents raising their grandchildren;

29 b. Match areas of need with an awareness of existing resources;

30 c. Provide a comprehensive resource guide for grandparents based
31 on existing programs and services; and

32 d. Recommend programs and services where they do not exist.

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34 4. a. Each community coalition shall issue an initial report no later
35 than six months after the community coalition has been organized and
36 a final report no later than one year after the effective date of this act
37 containing its findings and recommendations. The reports shall be

1 submitted directly to the Commissioner of Human Services as well as
2 to the chairpersons of the Senate Women's Issues, Children and Family
3 Services and the Assembly Community Services Committees, or their
4 successor committees. The final report shall include recommendations
5 for the establishment of a Statewide system to provide monitoring and
6 evaluation of entitlements, benefits and services for grandparents
7 raising their grandchildren. The reports shall be provided also to the
8 appropriate county governing body.

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10 5. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department
11 of Human Services \$25,000 to provide each of the five community
12 coalitions with a \$5,000 grant to effectuate the purposes of this act.

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14 6. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire one year
15 following enactment.

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18 STATEMENT

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20 This bill requires the Commissioner of Human Services to provide
21 funding to five counties on a pilot basis to establish broad-based
22 community coalitions to address the needs and concerns of
23 grandparents raising their grandchildren. The counties to be funded are
24 as follows: Atlantic, Essex, Mercer, Middlesex and Monmouth. Each
25 coalition will be comprised of 11 members who will be appointed by
26 the county governing body. The members will represent community
27 agencies, law enforcement, the courts and the fields of health, housing,
28 child care, substance abuse and education. Grandparents raising their
29 grandchildren will also be included as members.

30 The goals of the community coalitions will be to: identify the needs
31 of grandparents raising their grandchildren; match areas of need with
32 an awareness of existing resources; provide a comprehensive resource
33 guide for grandparents based on existing programs and services; and
34 recommend programs and services where they do not exist.

35 The community coalitions will issue and directly submit an interim
36 and final report of their findings and recommendations to the
37 Commissioner of Human Services as well as to the chairpersons of the
38 Senate Women's Issues, Children and Family Services and the
39 Assembly Community Services Committees. The reports will also be
40 provided to the appropriate county governing body.

41 The bill provides an appropriation of \$25,000 to the Department of
42 Human Services to provide grants of \$5,000 to each of the five
43 community coalitions. The bill provides that its provisions will expire
44 one year following enactment.

45 This bill is designed to address the needs and concerns of
46 grandparents raising their grandchildren due to various situations.

1 These situations include unmarried teenage children; children returning
2 home from failed relationships; children who are addicted to alcohol
3 and drugs; children who are incarcerated; and children who have either
4 deserted their families or died due to illnesses such as AIDS.

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9 Establishes pilot community coalitions to address the needs of
10 grandparents raising their grandchildren and appropriates \$25,000.