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House Bill 1316 & Senate Bill 0538: Paid Leave for Adoptive and Foster Parents

Lilia Zylstra

lilia.zylstra@pop.belmont.edu

Caroline Shutley

Belmont University, caroline.shutley@bruins.belmont.edu

Sydney Reyes

Belmont University, sydney.reyes@bruins.belmont.edu

Evelyn Mankowski

Belmont University, evelyn.mankowski@bruins.belmont.edu

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Abstract

House Bill 1316 and its companion Senate Bill 0538 propose that employees of the state of Tennessee should be allotted up to 6 weeks paid leave if they become a foster parent to a minor or adopt a minor. To better understand HB 1316 and SB 0538 from a social work perspective, it is vital to examine how the proposed bill promotes the importance of human relationships, the dignity and worth of a person, and social justice—while also recognizing where the bill has room for growth. This study of HB1316 will provide an in-depth analysis of the bill from a social work lens in support of its passing, while also providing suggestions for improvements. Studying qualitative data about foster care in the United States will provide awareness and understanding of spaces for improvement in that area, and this data will connect with HB1316 as it works to improve the shortcomings of foster care and adoption. Potential foster and adoptive parents must be met with competency and flexibility in terms of leave from work, resources given, education, and support from the agency while they form connections with a child or teen (Buehler, Rhodes, Orme, & Cuddeback, 2006). Adoptive and foster parents are underserved, and the goal of this research is to promote fostering and adoption through proactive advocacy and the passing of HB1316, followed up by the creation of and passing of similar bills.

Keywords: House Bill; Senate Bill; Paid Leave; Time off; Adoptive Parents; Foster Parents