

House Bill 1025

By: Representatives Davis of the 87<sup>th</sup>, Schofield of the 63<sup>rd</sup>, and Scott of the 76<sup>th</sup>

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 5 of Chapter 11 of Title 15 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
2 relating to child in need of services, so as to provide for funding for the child in need of  
3 services (CHINS) program, subject to appropriations; to provide for legislative findings and  
4 intent; to provide for definitions; to designate the Department of Education as the oversight  
5 agency for the fund; to establish a CHINS Support Fund and regional coordination system;  
6 to provide for the allocation of resources for services and supports; to provide for rules,  
7 regulations, and procedures; to provide for implementation; to provide for a short title; to  
8 provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

10 **SECTION 1.**

11 This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Children in Need of Services (CHINS)  
12 Funding Act."

13 **SECTION 2.**

14 Article 5 of Chapter 11 of Title 15 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
15 child in need of services, is amended by adding a new part to read as follows:

"Part 8

16

17 15-11-455.18 (a) The General Assembly finds that:19 (1) The child in need of services (CHINS) program is essential to address the needs of  
20 youth at risk without resorting to juvenile court or involving the Department of Juvenile  
21 Justice; and22 (2) Adequate funding and infrastructure for the CHINS program will prevent status  
23 offenses and behavioral issues from escalating, provide community based interventions,  
24 and reduce recidivism while improving public safety and family stability.25 (b) The purpose of this part is to establish dedicated funding, management, and  
26 accountability for the CHINS program to ensure uniform implementation and effectiveness  
27 across this state.28 15-11-456.29 As used in this part, the term:30 (1) 'CHINS' means a child in need of services as such term is defined in Code Section  
31 15-11-2.32 (2) 'DOE' means the Department of Education.33 (3) 'Fund' means the CHINS Support Fund established by this part.34 (4) 'RESA' means a regional educational service agency as provided for in Code Section  
35 20-2-270.36 (5) 'Status offense' shall have the same meaning as set forth in Code Section 15-11-381.

37 15-11-457.

38 (a) There is established the Children in Need of Services Support Fund to provide  
39 comprehensive support for any youth who commits a status offense to receive appropriate  
40 interventions without involvement from DJJ.

41 (b) The DOE shall be authorized to coordinate with the Council of Juvenile Court Judges  
42 to ensure state-wide implementation and training for CHINS fund staff in collaboration  
43 with RESAs.

44 (c) The DOE is authorized to prescribe rules, regulations, and procedures no later than  
45 January 1, 2027, as may be reasonable and necessary to carry out the purposes of this part  
46 and shall administer the fund in accordance with the provisions of this part.

47 (d) Subject to appropriations made specifically for the purposes of this part, the fund shall  
48 provide grants for:

49 (1) School based and community based service providers to deliver wraparound  
50 supports, including crisis intervention, mental health and substance use treatment, family  
51 strengthening programs, and academic enrichment;

52 (2) Residential placement providers to expand services for youth under DJJ supervision  
53 and those no longer under DJJ supervision; and

54 (3) Housing providers to support emerging adults ages 18 through 24 who are at risk of  
55 homelessness or require specialized care after leaving DJJ supervision.

56 (e) Nothing contained in this Code section shall prevent the state from receiving grants,  
57 gifts, or bequests for the purposes of the fund as provided for in this Code section and  
58 appropriating such moneys for purposes of the fund.

59 15-11-458.

60 Subject to appropriations made specifically for the purposes of this part:

61 (1) A CHINS state-wide coordinator position shall be established within the Council of  
62 Juvenile Court Judges; and

63 (2) One RESA based CHINS coordinator shall be designated in each of the 16 RESA  
64 regions.

65 15-11-459.

66 All moneys accrued by the fund shall be used to provide resources to counties whose  
67 poverty rates exceed the state's overall poverty rate, and allocations from the fund shall be  
68 based on complaint data pursuant to Code Section 15-11-390, child poverty rates,  
69 population, and service needs.

70 15-11-460.

71 (a) The DOE shall prepare an annual report detailing:

72 (1) All revenues and expenditures of the fund for the previous year;

73 (2) The status of projects and initiatives supported by the fund; and

74 (3) Recommendations for improvements.

75 (b) The report provided for in subsection (a) of this Code section shall be submitted to the  
76 Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President of the Senate by  
77 December 31 of each year and made available on the DOE's website."

78 **SECTION 3.**

79 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.