

# Massachusetts Senate approves DCF reporting bill

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A bill imposing new reporting requirements on the Department of Children and Families for oversight purposes quickly passed through the Senate Friday after receiving unanimous House approval earlier this month.

The Senate Ways and Means Committee's version of the bill (H 4852) requires DCF to publish annual reports on children in its care, establish a three-year safety and well-being plan, and to study existing protections for vulnerable minors. Like the House bill, the Senate includes language granting new supports to foster parents and outlines clearer requirements DCF must meet in its interaction with foster parents, a section proponents called the "Foster Parents' Bill of Rights."

The full Senate unanimously approved the bill following its release from committee. In early July, the House approved the bill 158-0. Lawmakers on Thursday agreed to suspend the traditional July 31 deadline for completing formal lawmaking business, but they still appear to be on a sprint to wrap up at least some delayed or slow-moving priorities by the end of the week.