

AN ACT concerning fatherhood.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Council on Responsible Fatherhood Act of 2008.

Section 5. Purpose. The purpose of this Act is to promote the recognition of the importance of the participation of both parents in the lives of their children. While social policy and practice have often focused on the difficulties of raising a child in a single parent family and have often created barriers to the involvement of both parents in their child's life, the purpose of this Act is to promote a social policy and practice that values the contribution that each parent brings to the family unit.

Section 10. Fatherhood initiative.

(a) The purpose of this Act shall be implemented through a fatherhood initiative located within the Department of Human Services and directed by the Council on Responsible Fatherhood created by this Act.

(b) The goals of the fatherhood initiative are to increase the awareness of the problems created when a child grows up without the presence of a responsible father; to identify

obstacles that impede or prevent the involvement of responsible fathers in the lives of their children; to identify strategies that are successful in overcoming identified obstacles and in encouraging responsible fatherhood; and to facilitate the transition from current policies, perceptions, and practices that adversely affect the participation of fathers in their children's lives to policies, perceptions, and practices that promote the contributions of responsible fathers. The fatherhood initiative must promote positive interaction between fathers and their children. While the emphasis of the program must be on the population of children whose families have received or are receiving public assistance, the program may not exclude other populations of children for which the program is appropriate.

(c) The fatherhood initiative must include, but is not limited to, the following:

(1) The promotion of public education concerning the financial and emotional responsibilities of fatherhood.

(2) The provision of assistance to men in preparing for the legal, financial, and emotional responsibilities of fatherhood.

(3) The promotion of the establishment of paternity upon the birth of a child.

(4) The encouragement of fathers in fostering an emotional connection to children and providing financial support to children.

(5) The establishment of support mechanisms for fathers developing and maintaining relationships with their children.

(6) The identification and promotion of methods that reduce the negative outcomes experienced by children affected by divorce, separation, and disputes concerning custody and visitation.

(7) The integration of State and local services available to families.

Section 15. Council on Responsible Fatherhood.

(a) The Council on Responsible Fatherhood is created to carry out the purposes, goals, and initiatives of this Act. The Council consists of 21 members appointed by the Governor. Members appointed by the Governor must be chosen on the basis of their interest in and experience with children and families. Members of the Council shall be appointed for 2-year terms, except for an appointment to fill an unexpired term, in which event the appointment shall be for the remainder of the unexpired term. In addition, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, the President of the Senate, and the Minority Leader of the Senate shall each appoint one ex officio, non-voting member. The Council must choose one member of the Council to be the Chairperson. A majority of the members appointed by the Governor constitutes a quorum. Members shall

serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed for their actual expenses in carrying out their duties as members of the Council. The Council shall meet at least quarterly, and the Chairperson and Department of Human Services may convene the Council at any time. Subject to appropriation, the Department of Human Services shall provide support to the Council.

(b) The Council has the following duties:

(1) To develop a comprehensive plan that promotes the positive involvement of fathers in their children's lives.

(2) To evaluate State programs, government policies, and community initiatives related to fatherhood and to make recommendations regarding those programs, policies, and initiatives to the Governor and the General Assembly.

(3) To convene a statewide symposium in order to discuss and resolve issues related to responsible fatherhood and the importance of the participation of both parents in their children's lives.

(4) Subject to appropriation, to develop criteria for and to issue requests for proposals for grants for responsible fatherhood projects and activities related to responsible fatherhood projects that are approved by the Council.

(5) To receive grants, contributions, and other funds for the purpose of projects and activities related to responsible fatherhood.

(6) To submit a report, on or before January 1 of each

year, to the Governor and the General Assembly concerning its findings and recommendations.

Section 20. Responsible Fathers Fund. Grants, contributions, and other funds received by the Council on Responsible Fatherhood must be deposited into the Responsible Fathers Fund, a special fund created in the State treasury, and, subject to appropriation and as directed by the Department of Human Services, may be expended for the purposes of this Act. In addition, upon the creation of the Responsible Fathers Fund, the State Comptroller shall direct and the State Treasurer shall transfer any moneys remaining in the Responsible Fatherhood Fund into the Responsible Fathers Fund. Upon completion of the transfer, the Responsible Fatherhood Fund shall be dissolved.

Section 25. Repeal. This Act is repealed on July 1, 2010.

Section 90. The State Finance Act is amended by adding Section 5.701 as follows:

(30 ILCS 105/5.701 new)

Sec. 5.701. The Responsible Fathers Fund.

(30 ILCS 105/5.608 rep.)

Section 95. The State Finance Act is amended by repealing

Public Act 095-0960

SB1864 Enrolled

LRB095 13618 WGH 39322 b

Section 5.608.

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law, except that Section 95 takes effect 30 days after becoming law.