LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA ONE HUNDRED FOURTH LEGISLATURE FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 265

FINAL READING

Introduced by Campbell, 25.

Read first time January 14, 2015

Committee: Judiciary

A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to juveniles and child welfare; to amend 1 2 sections 29-1816, 43-245, 43-246.01, 43-247, 43-297.01, 43-2,129, 43-1301, 43-1302, 43-1303, 43-1304, 43-1308, 43-1309, 43-1313, 3 43-1318, and 43-2404.02, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 4 5 2014; to change provisions relating to arraignment of juveniles, court jurisdiction of juveniles, placement of juveniles, foster care 6 7 placements, duties of the Foster Care Review Office, membership of 8 the Foster Care Advisory Committee, local foster care review boards, 9 foster care records, and the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid 10 Program; to define and redefine terms; to extend juvenile court jurisdiction to young adults as prescribed; to provide for a foster 11 care case file review process; to exempt certain meetings of local 12 foster care review boards from the Open Meetings Act; to create a 13 14 pilot project and advisory group regarding data on out-of-home placements; to provide for development of a common data set relating 15 juveniles; to eliminate obsolete provisions; to harmonize 16 to 17 provisions; to provide operative dates; to repeal the original 18 sections; and to declare an emergency.

19 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

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Section 1. Section 29-1816, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,
 2014, is amended to read:

3 29-1816 (1)(a) The accused may be arraigned in county court or
4 district court:

5 (i) If the accused was eighteen years of age or older when the6 alleged offense was committed;

7 (ii) If the accused was younger than eighteen years of age and was
8 fourteen years of age or older when an alleged offense punishable as a
9 Class I, IA, IB, IC, ID, II, or III felony was committed;-or

10 (iii) If the alleged offense is a traffic offense as defined in 11 section 43-245; or -

(iv) Until January 1, 2017, if the accused was seventeen years of
 age when an alleged offense described in subdivision (1) of section
 43-247 was committed.

(b) Arraignment in county court or district court shall be by 15 reading to the accused the complaint or information, unless the reading 16 17 is waived by the accused when the nature of the charge is made known to him or her. The accused shall then be asked whether he or she is guilty 18 or not guilty of the offense charged. If the accused appears in person 19 and by counsel and goes to trial before a jury regularly impaneled and 20 sworn, he or she shall be deemed to have waived arraignment and a plea of 21 22 not guilty shall be deemed to have been made.

(2) At the time of the arraignment, the county court or district 23 24 court shall advise the accused, if the accused was younger than eighteen 25 years of age at the time the alleged offense was committed, that the accused may move the county court or district court at any time not later 26 than thirty days after arraignment, unless otherwise permitted by the 27 28 court for good cause shown, to waive jurisdiction in such case to the juvenile court for further proceedings under the Nebraska Juvenile Code. 29 This subsection does not apply if the case was transferred to county 30 court or district court from juvenile court. 31

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(3) For motions to transfer a case from the county court or district
 court to juvenile court:

3 (a) The county court or district court shall schedule a hearing on such motion within fifteen days. The customary rules of evidence shall 4 5 not be followed at such hearing. The accused shall be represented by an attorney. The criteria set forth in section 43-276 shall be considered at 6 7 such hearing. After considering all the evidence and reasons presented by both parties, the case shall be transferred to juvenile court unless a 8 9 sound basis exists for retaining the case in county court or district court; and 10

(b) The county court or district court shall set forth findings for 11 the reason for its decision. If the county court or district court 12 determines that the accused should be transferred to the juvenile court, 13 the complete file in the county court or district court shall be 14 transferred to the juvenile court and the complaint, indictment, or 15 16 information may be used in place of a petition therein. The county court or district court making a transfer shall order the accused to be taken 17 forthwith to the juvenile court and designate where the juvenile shall be 18 kept pending determination by the juvenile court. The juvenile court 19 shall then proceed as provided in the Nebraska Juvenile Code. 20

(4) When the accused was younger than eighteen years of age when an
alleged offense was committed, the county attorney or city attorney shall
proceed under section 43-274.

24 Sec. 2. Section 43-245, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 25 2014, is amended to read:

43-245 For purposes of the Nebraska Juvenile Code, unless the
 context otherwise requires:

(1) Abandonment means a parent's intentionally withholding from a
child, without just cause or excuse, the parent's presence, care, love,
protection, and maintenance and the opportunity for the display of
parental affection for the child;

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(2) Age of majority means nineteen years of age;

2 (3) Approved center means a center that has applied for and received
3 approval from the Director of the Office of Dispute Resolution under
4 section 25-2909;

5 (4) Civil citation means a noncriminal notice which cannot result in
6 a criminal record and is described in section 43-248.02;

7 (5) Cost or costs means (a) the sum or equivalent expended, paid, or
8 charged for goods or services, or expenses incurred, or (b) the
9 contracted or negotiated price;

(6) Criminal street gang means a group of three or more people with
 a common identifying name, sign, or symbol whose group identity or
 purposes include engaging in illegal activities;

(7) Criminal street gang member means a person who willingly or
 voluntarily becomes and remains a member of a criminal street gang;

(8) Custodian means a nonparental caretaker having physical custody
of the juvenile and includes an appointee described in section 43-294;

(9) Guardian means a person, other than a parent, who has qualified
by law as the guardian of a juvenile pursuant to testamentary or court
appointment, but excludes a person who is merely a guardian ad litem;

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(10) Juvenile means any person under the age of eighteen;

(11) Juvenile court means the separate juvenile court where it has been established pursuant to sections 43-2,111 to 43-2,127 and the county court sitting as a juvenile court in all other counties. Nothing in the Nebraska Juvenile Code shall be construed to deprive the district courts of their habeas corpus, common-law, or chancery jurisdiction or the county courts and district courts of jurisdiction of domestic relations matters as defined in section 25-2740;

(12) Juvenile detention facility has the same meaning as in section
83-4,125;

30 (13) Legal custody has the same meaning as in section 43-2922;

31 (14) Mediator for juvenile offender and victim mediation means a

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1 person who (a) has completed at least thirty hours of training in 2 conflict resolution techniques, neutrality, agreement writing, and ethics 3 set forth in section 25-2913, (b) has an additional eight hours of 4 juvenile offender and victim mediation training, and (c) meets the 5 apprenticeship requirements set forth in section 25-2913;

6 (15) Mental health facility means a treatment facility as defined in
7 section 71-914 or a government, private, or state hospital which treats
8 mental illness;

9 (16) Nonoffender means a juvenile who is subject to the jurisdiction 10 of the juvenile court for reasons other than legally prohibited conduct, 11 including, but not limited to, juveniles described in subdivision (3)(a) 12 of section 43-247;

13 (17) Nonsecure detention means detention characterized by the 14 absence of restrictive hardware, construction, and procedure. Nonsecure 15 detention services may include a range of placement and supervision 16 options, such as home detention, electronic monitoring, day reporting, 17 drug court, tracking and monitoring supervision, staff secure and 18 temporary holdover facilities, and group homes;

(18) Parent means one or both parents or stepparents when the
stepparent is married to a parent who has physical custody of the
juvenile as of the filing of the petition;

(19) Parties means the juvenile as described in section 43-247 and
his or her parent, guardian, or custodian;

24 (20) Physical custody has the same meaning as in section 43-2922;

(21) Except in proceedings under the Nebraska Indian Child Welfare
Act, relative means father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, brother,
sister, stepfather, stepmother, stepbrother, stepsister, uncle, aunt,
first cousin, nephew, or niece;

(22) Seal a record means that a record shall not be available to thepublic except upon the order of a court upon good cause shown;

31 (23) Secure detention means detention in a highly structured,

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1 residential, hardware-secured facility designed to restrict a juvenile's 2 movement;

3 (24) Staff secure juvenile facility has the same meaning as in
4 section 83-4,125;

5 (25) Status offender means a juvenile who has been charged with or 6 adjudicated for conduct which would not be a crime if committed by an 7 adult, including, but not limited to, juveniles charged under subdivision 8 (3)(b) of section 43-247 and sections 53-180.01 and 53-180.02;—and

9 (26) Traffic offense means any nonfelonious act in violation of a 10 law or ordinance regulating vehicular or pedestrian travel, whether 11 designated a misdemeanor or a traffic infraction<u>; and</u> -

12 (27) Young adult means an individual older than eighteen years of
 13 age but under twenty-one years of age.

Sec. 3. Section 43-246.01, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2014, is amended to read:

16 43-246.01 The juvenile court shall have:

17 (1) Exclusive original jurisdiction as to:

18 (a) Any juvenile described in subdivision (3), (11), or (12) of 19 section 43-247;

(b) Any juvenile who was under sixteen years of age at the time the
alleged offense was committed and the offense falls under subdivision (1)
of section 43-247;

(c) A party or proceeding described in subdivision (5) or (7) of
 section 43-247; and

(d) Any juvenile who was under fourteen years of age at the time the
alleged offense was committed and the offense falls under subdivision (2)
of section 43-247;

28 (2) Exclusive original jurisdiction as to:

(a) Beginning January 1, 2015, any juvenile who is alleged to have
committed an offense under subdivision (1) of section 43-247 and who was
sixteen years of age at the time the alleged offense was committed, and

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beginning January 1, 2017, any juvenile who is alleged to have committed an offense under subdivision (1) of section 43-247 and who was sixteen years of age or seventeen years of age at the time the alleged offense was committed; and

5 (b) Any juvenile who was fourteen years of age or older at the time 6 the alleged offense was committed and the offense falls under subdivision 7 (2) of section 43-247 except offenses enumerated in subdivision (1)(a) 8 (ii) of section 29-1816.

9 Proceedings initiated under this subdivision (2) may be transferred
10 as provided in section 43-274; and

11 (3) Concurrent original jurisdiction with the county court or 12 district court as to:

13 (a) Any juvenile described in subdivision (4) of section 43-247;

14 (b) Any proceeding under subdivision (6), (8), (9), or (10) of 15 section 43-247;—and

16 (c) Any juvenile described in subdivision (1)(a)(ii) of section 17 29-1816; and -

(d) Until January 1, 2017, any juvenile who is alleged to have
 committed an offense under subdivision (1) of section 43-247 and who was
 seventeen years of age at the time the alleged offense was committed.

21 Proceedings initiated under this subdivision (3) may be transferred 22 as provided in section 43-274.

23 Sec. 4. <u>(1) The juvenile court's jurisdiction over a young adult</u> 24 <u>may be extended beyond eighteen years of age, but in no case beyond</u> 25 <u>twenty-one years of age, when:</u>

26 (a) The young adult is alleged to have committed an offense under
 27 subdivision (1), (2), (3)(b), or (4) of section 43-247;

(b) The young adult was under the age of eighteen when the offense
 was committed; and

30 <u>(c) All parties consent to the juvenile court's extended</u> 31 jurisdiction for the purposes of continuing treatment or services which

1	<u>are related to the offense.</u>
2	<u>(2) If jurisdiction is extended beyond eighteen years of age under</u>
3	subsection (1) of this section, the juvenile court shall:
4	<u>(a) Specify the length of the extension, not to exceed a six-month</u>
5	<u>increment;</u>
6	(b) Specify what treatment or services will be provided in the
7	juvenile court order during the extended jurisdiction; and
8	<u>(c) At the request of a party, set a review hearing every six months</u>
9	thereafter at which an additional six-month incremental extension may be
10	<u>considered.</u>
11	(3) If no review hearing is set initially, the parties may, by
12	stipulated motion signed by all parties, request further extensions in
13	increments of no greater than six months. If no party requests an
14	additional six-month extension through stipulated motion or by requesting
15	<u>a review hearing, the extended jurisdiction shall terminate at the end of</u>
16	the period specified in the original order or at the end of six months
17	after the order extending jurisdiction, whichever occurs first.
18	<u>(4) Treatment ordered under this section shall not include</u>
19	commitment to a youth rehabilitation and treatment center or a juvenile
20	detention facility.
21	(5) Upon termination of jurisdiction pursuant to this section, the
22	juvenile court shall initiate proceedings pursuant to section 43-2,108.04
23	to seal the young adult's records.
24	Sec. 5. Section 43-247, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,
25	2014, is amended to read:
26	43-247 The juvenile court in each county shall have jurisdiction of:
27	(1) Any juvenile who has committed an act other than a traffic
28	offense which would constitute a misdemeanor or an infraction under the
29	laws of this state, or violation of a city or village ordinance;
30	(2) Any juvenile who has committed an act which would constitute a
31	felony under the laws of this state;

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1 (3) Any juvenile (a) who is homeless or destitute, or without proper support through no fault of his or her parent, quardian, or custodian; 2 who is abandoned by his or her parent, guardian, or custodian; who lacks 3 proper parental care by reason of the fault or habits of his or her 4 5 parent, quardian, or custodian; whose parent, quardian, or custodian 6 neglects or refuses to provide proper or necessary subsistence, 7 education, or other care necessary for the health, morals, or well-being of such juvenile; whose parent, quardian, or custodian is unable to 8 9 provide or neglects or refuses to provide special care made necessary by 10 the mental condition of the juvenile; or who is in a situation or engages in an occupation, including prostitution, dangerous to life or limb or 11 injurious to the health or morals of such juvenile, (b) who, by reason of 12 being wayward or habitually disobedient, is uncontrolled by his or her 13 parent, quardian, or custodian; who deports himself or herself so as to 14 injure or endanger seriously the morals or health of himself, herself, or 15 16 others; or who is habitually truant from home or school, or (c) who is 17 mentally ill and dangerous as defined in section 71-908;

18 (4) Any juvenile who has committed an act which would constitute a
19 traffic offense as defined in section 43-245;

(5) The parent, guardian, or custodian of any juvenile described inthis section;

22 (6) The proceedings for termination of parental rights;

(7) Any juvenile who has been voluntarily relinquished, pursuant to
section 43-106.01, to the Department of Health and Human Services or any
child placement agency licensed by the Department of Health and Human
Services;

(8) Any juvenile who was a ward of the juvenile court at the
inception of his or her guardianship and whose guardianship has been
disrupted or terminated;

30 (9) The adoption or guardianship proceedings for a child over which31 the juvenile court already has jurisdiction under another provision of

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1 the Nebraska Juvenile Code;

2 (10) The paternity or custody determination for a child over which
3 the juvenile court already has jurisdiction; and

4 (11) The proceedings under the Young Adult Bridge to Independence
5 Act; -

6 (12) Any young adult over whom the juvenile court has extended
7 jurisdiction pursuant to section 4 of this act; and

8 (13) Except as provided in subdivisions (11) and (12) of this 9 section, any individual adjudged to be within the provisions of this 10 section until the individual reaches the age of majority or the court 11 otherwise discharges the individual from its jurisdiction.

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Nebraska Juvenile Code, the determination of jurisdiction over any Indian child as defined in section 43-1503 shall be subject to the Nebraska Indian Child Welfare Act; and the district court shall have exclusive jurisdiction in proceedings brought pursuant to section 71-510.

Sec. 6. Section 43-297.01, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,2014, is amended to read:

19 43-297.01 (1) Following an adjudication, whenever any juvenile is 20 placed on juvenile probation subject to the supervision of a probation 21 officer, the Office of Probation Administration is deemed to have 22 placement and care responsibility for the juvenile.

23 (2) The court shall order the initial placement and level of care 24 for the juvenile placed on juvenile probation. Prior to determining the 25 placement and level of care for a juvenile, the court may solicit a recommendation from the Office of Probation Administration. The status of 26 each juvenile placed out-of-home shall be reviewed periodically, but not 27 28 less than once every six months by the court in person, by video, or telephonically. Periodic reviews shall assess the juvenile's safety and 29 the continued necessity and appropriateness of placement, ensure case 30 plan compliance, and monitor the juvenile's progress. The court shall 31

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1 determine whether an out-of-home placement made by the office is in the 2 best interests of the juvenile. The office shall provide all interested 3 parties with a copy of any report filed with the court by the office 4 pursuant to this subsection.

5 (3) The Office of Probation Administration may transition a juvenile to a less restrictive placement or to a placement which has the same 6 7 level of restriction as the current placement. In order to make a placement change under this section, the office shall file a notice of 8 9 placement change with the court and shall send copies of the notice to 10 all interested parties at least seven days before the change of placement. The court, on its own motion, or upon the filing of an 11 objection to the change by an interested party, may order a hearing to 12 13 review such a change in placement and may order that the change be stayed pending the outcome of the hearing on the objection. 14

(4) The Office of Probation Administration may make an immediate change in placement without court approval only if the juvenile is in a harmful or dangerous situation. Approval of the court shall be sought within twenty-four hours after making the change in placement or as soon thereafter as possible. The office shall provide all interested parties with a copy of any report filed with the court by the office pursuant to this subsection.

(5) Whenever the court places a juvenile in a foster care placement as defined in section 43-1301, the Foster Care Review Office or designated local foster care review board may participate in proceedings concerning the juvenile as provided in section 43-1313 and notice shall be given as provided in section 43-1314.

27 (6) Any written findings or recommendations of the Foster Care
 28 Review Office or the designated local foster care review board with
 29 regard to a juvenile in a foster care placement submitted to a court
 30 having jurisdiction over such juvenile shall be admissible in any
 31 proceeding concerning such juvenile if such findings or recommendations

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have been provided to all other parties of record.

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2 (<u>7</u> 5) Nothing in this section prevents the court on an ex parte
3 basis from approving an immediate change in placement upon good cause
4 shown.

5 Sec. 7. Section 43-2,129, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,
6 2014, is amended to read:

43-2,129 Sections 43-245 to 43-2,129 <u>and section 4 of this act shall</u>
be known and may be cited as the Nebraska Juvenile Code.

9 Sec. 8. Section 43-1301, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,
10 2014, is amended to read:

11 43-1301 For purposes of the Foster Care Review Act, unless the 12 context otherwise requires:

13 (1) Local board means a local foster care review board created
14 pursuant to section 43-1304;

(2) Office means the Foster Care Review Office created pursuant to
section 43-1302;

17 (3) Foster care facility means any foster family home as defined in
18 section 71-1901, residential child-caring agency as defined in section
19 71-1926, public agency, private agency, or any other person or entity
20 receiving and caring for foster children;

(4) Foster care placements means (a) all types of placements of 21 22 juveniles described in sections 43-245 and section 43-247, (b) all types of placements of neglected, dependent, or delinquent children, including 23 24 those made directly by the Department of Health and Human Services, by the court, by parents, or by third parties, (c) all types of and 25 placements of children who have been voluntarily relinquished pursuant to 26 section 43-106.01 to the <u>department</u> Department of Health and Human 27 Services or any child-placing agency as defined in section 71-1926 28 licensed by the <u>department</u>, and (d) all types of placements that are 29 considered to be a trial home visit, including those made directly by the 30 department or office Department of Health and Human Services; 31

1 (5) Person or court in charge of the child means (a) the Department 2 of Health and Human Services, an association, or an individual who has been made the guardian of a neglected, dependent, or delinquent child by 3 the court and has the responsibility of the care of the child and has the 4 authority by and with the assent of the court to place such a child in a 5 suitable family home or institution or has been entrusted with the care 6 of the child by a voluntary placement made by a parent or legal guardian, 7 (b) the court which has jurisdiction over the child, or (c) the entity 8 9 having jurisdiction over the child pursuant to the Nebraska Indian Child Welfare Act; 10

(6) Voluntary placement means the placement by a parent or legal
guardian who relinquishes the possession and care of a child to a third
party, individual, or agency;

(7) Family unit means the social unit consisting of the foster child and the parent or parents or any person in the relationship of a parent, including a grandparent, and any siblings with whom the foster child legally resided prior to placement in foster care, except that for purposes of potential sibling placement, the child's family unit also includes the child's siblings even if the child has not resided with such siblings prior to placement in foster care;

(8) Residential child-caring agency has the definition found in
 section 71-1926;

(9) Child-placing agency has the definition found in section
71-1926; and

(10) Siblings means biological siblings and legal siblings,
 including, but not limited to, half-siblings and stepsiblings; and -

27 (11) Trial home visit means a placement of a court-involved juvenile
 28 who goes from a foster care placement back to his or her legal parent or
 29 parents or guardian but remains as a ward of the state.

30 Sec. 9. Section 43-1302, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,
31 2014, is amended to read:

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1 43-1302 (1)(a) The Foster Care Review Office is hereby established. 2 The purpose of the office is to provide information and direct reporting to the courts, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Office of 3 4 Probation Administration, and the Legislature regarding the foster care system in Nebraska; to provide oversight of the foster care system; and 5 to make recommendations regarding foster care policy to the Legislature. 6 The executive director of the Foster Care Review Office office shall 7 information reporting services, provide 8 provide and analysis of 9 information obtained, and oversee foster care file audit case reviews and 10 tracking of cases of children in the foster care system. The executive director of the office shall, through information analysis and with the 11 assistance of the Foster Care Advisory Committee, $(\underline{a} \neq)$ determine key 12 13 issues of the foster care system and ways to resolve the issues and to otherwise improve the system and $(\underline{b} \pm \underline{i})$ make policy recommendations. 14

15 (b) All equipment and effects of the State Foster Care Review Board 16 on July 1, 2012, shall be transferred to the Foster Care Review Office, 17 and all staff of the board, except the executive director and interim 18 executive director, shall be transferred to the office. The State Foster 19 Care Review Board shall terminate on July 1, 2012. Beginning on July 1, 2012, the data coordinator of the board, as such position existed prior 20 21 to such date, shall serve as the executive director of the office until 22 the Foster Care Advisory Committee hires an executive director as prescribed by this section. It is the intent of the Legislature that the 23 24 staff of the board employed prior to July 1, 2012, shall continue to be 25 employed by the office until such time as the executive director is hired by the committee. 26

(c) It is the intent of the Legislature that the funds appropriated
 to the State Foster Care Review Board be transferred to the Foster Care
 Review Office for FY2012-13.

30 (2)(a) The Foster Care Advisory Committee is created. The committee
 31 shall have five members appointed by the Governor. <u>Three members shall be</u>

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1 local board members, one member shall have data analysis experience, and 2 one member shall be a resident of the state who is representative of the 3 public at large. The members shall have no pecuniary interest in the 4 foster care system and shall not be employed by the office, the 5 Department of Health and Human Services, a county, a residential child-6 caring agency, a child-placing agency, or a court.

7 (b) The Governor shall appoint three members from a list of twelve local board members submitted by the Health and Human Services Committee 8 9 of the Legislature, one member from a list of four persons with data 10 analysis experience submitted by the Health and Human Services Committee of the Legislature, and one member from a list of four persons who are 11 12 residents of the state and are representative of the public at large 13 submitted by the Health and Human Services Committee of the Legislature. The Health and Human Services Committee of the Legislature shall hold a 14 confirmation hearing for the appointees, and the appointments shall be 15 16 subject to confirmation by the Legislature, except that the initial 17 members and members appointed while the Legislature is not in session shall serve until the next session of the Legislature, at which time a 18 19 majority of the members of the Legislature shall approve or disapprove of the appointments. 20

(c) The terms of the members shall be for three years, except that 21 the Governor shall designate two of the initial appointees to serve 22 initial terms ending on March 1, 2014, and three of the initial 23 24 appointees to serve initial terms ending on March 1, 2015. The Governor 25 shall make the initial appointments within thirty days after July 1, 2012. Members shall not serve more than two consecutive terms, except 26 that members shall serve until their successors have been appointed and 27 28 qualified. The Governor shall appoint members to fill vacancies from the 29 same category as the vacated position in the same manner as the original appointments to serve for the remainder of the unexpired term. 30

31 (d) The Foster Care Advisory Committee shall meet at least four

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times each calendar year. Each member shall attend at least two meetings each calendar year and shall be subject to removal for failure to attend at least two meetings unless excused by a majority of the members of the committee. Members shall be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses as provided in sections 81-1174 to 81-1177.

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(e) The duties of the Foster Care Advisory Committee are to:

7 (i) Hire and fire an executive director for the office who has8 training and experience in foster care; and

9 (ii) Support and facilitate the work of the office, including the 10 tracking of children in foster care and reviewing foster care file audit 11 case reviews.

12 (3) The executive director of the office shall hire, fire, and 13 supervise office staff and shall be responsible for the duties of the 14 office as provided by law, including the annual report and other 15 reporting, review, tracking, data collection and analysis, and oversight 16 and training of local boards.

Sec. 10. Section 43-1303, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,2014, is amended to read:

19 43-1303 (1) The office shall maintain the statewide register of all foster care placements occurring within the state, and there shall be a 20 weekly monthly report made to the registry of all foster care placements 21 22 by the Department of Health and Human Services, any child-placing agency, or any court in a form as developed by the office in consultation with 23 24 representatives of entities required to make such reports. For each child entering and leaving foster care, such monthly report shall consist of 25 identifying information, placement information, 26 and the plan or permanency plan developed by the person or court in charge of the child 27 28 pursuant to section 43-1312. The department, the Office of Probation Administration, and every court and child-placing agency shall report any 29 foster care placement within three working days. The report shall contain 30 the following information: 31

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(a) Child identification information, including name, social
 security number, date of birth, gender, race, and religion, and
 <u>ethnicity;</u>

4 (b) Identification information for parents and stepparents,
5 including name, social security number, address, and status of parental
6 rights;

7 (c) Placement information, including initial placement date, current
8 placement date, and the name and address of the foster care <u>placement</u>
9 provider;

(d) Court status information, including which court has
jurisdiction, initial custody date, court hearing date, and results of
the court hearing;

13 (e) Agency or other entity having custody of the child; and

14 (f) Case worker, probation officer, or person providing direct case 15 management or supervision functions. ; and

16 (g) Permanency plan objective.

17 (2)(a) The <u>Foster Care Review Office</u> office shall designate a local
18 board to conduct foster care file audit case reviews for each case of
19 children in foster care placement.

(b) The office may adopt and promulgate rules and regulations forthe following:

(i) Establishment of training programs for local board members which
 shall include an initial training program and periodic inservice training
 programs;

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(ii) Development of procedures for local boards;

(iii) Establishment of a central record-keeping facility for all
 local board files, including foster care file audit case reviews;

(iv) Accumulation of data and the making of annual reports on
children in foster care <u>placements</u>. Such reports shall include, <u>but not</u>
<u>be limited to</u>, (A) personal data on length of time in foster care, (B)
number of placements, (C) frequency and results of foster care file audit

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1 case reviews and court review hearings, (D) number of children supervised 2 by the foster care programs in the state annually, (E) trend data 3 impacting foster care, services, and placements, (F) analysis of the 4 data, and (G) recommendations for improving the foster care system in 5 Nebraska;

6 (v) Accumulation of data and the making of quarterly reports
7 regarding the children in foster care placements;

8 $(\underline{vi} \neq)$ To the extent not prohibited by section 43-1310, evaluation 9 of the judicial and administrative data collected on foster care and the 10 dissemination of such data to the judiciary, public and private agencies, 11 the department, and members of the public; and

12 (<u>vii</u> vi) Manner in which the office shall determine the 13 appropriateness of requesting a court review hearing as provided for in 14 section 43-1313.

(3) A local board shall send a written report to the office for each foster care file audit case review conducted by the local board. A court shall send a written report to the office for each foster care review hearing conducted by the court.

(4) The office shall report and make recommendations to the 19 Legislature, the department, the Office of Probation Administration, the 20 courts, local boards, and county welfare offices. Such reports and 21 22 recommendations shall include, but not be limited to, the annual judicial and administrative data collected on foster care pursuant to subsections 23 24 (2) and (3) of this section and the annual evaluation of such data. The 25 report and recommendations submitted to the Legislature shall be submitted electronically. In addition, the Foster Care Review Office 26 27 office shall provide copies of such reports and recommendations to each 28 court having the authority to make foster care placements. The executive director of the office or his or her designees from the office may visit 29 30 and observe foster care facilities in order to ascertain whether the individual physical, psychological, and sociological needs of each foster 31

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child are being met. The executive director of the office shall also 1 2 provide, at a time specified by the Health and Human Services Committee of the Legislature, regular electronic updates regarding child welfare 3 4 data and information at least quarterly, and a fourth-quarter report 5 which shall be the annual report. The executive director shall include issues, policy concerns, and problems which have come to the office and 6 the executive director from analysis of the data. The executive director 7 shall recommend alternatives to the identified problems and related needs 8 9 of the office and the foster care system to the committee. The Health and Human Services Committee shall coordinate and prioritize data and 10 information requests submitted to the office by members of 11 the Legislature. The annual report of the office shall be completed by 12 December 1 each year, beginning December 1, 2012, and shall be submitted 13 electronically to the committee. 14

15 (5) The executive director of the office or his or her designees 16 from the office may visit and observe foster care facilities in order to 17 ascertain whether the individual physical, psychological, and 18 sociological needs of each foster child are being met.

19 (6) At the request of any state agency, the executive director of 20 the office or his or her designees from the office may conduct a case 21 file review process and data analysis regarding any state ward or ward of 22 the court whether placed in-home or out-of-home at the time of the case 23 file review.

24 Sec. 11. Section 43-1304, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 25 2014, is amended to read:

43-1304 There shall be local foster care review boards to conduct the foster care file audit case reviews of children in foster care placement and carry out other powers and duties given to such boards under the Foster Care Review Act. Members of local boards serving on July 1, 2012, shall continue to serve the unexpired portion of their terms. The executive director of the office shall select members to serve on

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local boards from a list of applications submitted to the office. Each 1 2 local board shall consist of not less than four and not more than ten members as determined by the executive director. The members of the local 3 board shall reasonably represent the various social, economic, racial, 4 5 and ethnic groups of the county or counties from which its members may be appointed. A person employed by the office, the Department of Health and 6 7 Human Services, a residential child-caring agency, a child-placing agency, or a court shall not be appointed to a local board. A list of the 8 9 members of each local board shall be sent to the department and the 10 Office of Probation Administration.

Sec. 12. Section 43-1308, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2014, is amended to read:

43-1308 (1) Except as otherwise provided in the Nebraska Indian
Child Welfare Act, the designated local board shall:

(a) Conduct a foster care file audit case review at least once every
six months for the case of each child in a foster care placement to
determine what efforts have been made to carry out the plan or permanency
plan for rehabilitation of the foster child and family unit or for
permanent placement of such child pursuant to section 43-1312;

(b) Submit to the court having jurisdiction over such child for the 20 purposes of foster care placement, within thirty days after the foster 21 care file audit case review, its findings and recommendations regarding 22 the efforts and progress made to carry out the plan or permanency plan 23 24 established pursuant to section 43-1312 together with any other 25 recommendations it chooses to make regarding the child. The findings and recommendations shall include whether there is a need for continued out-26 of-home placement, whether the current placement is safe and appropriate, 27 28 the specific reasons for the findings and recommendations, including factors, opinions, and rationale considered in the foster care file audit 29 case review, whether the grounds for termination of parental rights under 30 section 43-292 appear to exist, and the date of the next foster care file 31

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1 audit case review by the designated local board;

2 (c) If the return of the child to his or her parents is not likely,
3 recommend referral for adoption and termination of parental rights,
4 guardianship, placement with a relative, or, as a last resort, another
5 planned, permanent living arrangement; and

6 (d) Promote and encourage stability and continuity in foster care by 7 discouraging unnecessary changes in the placement of foster children and 8 by encouraging the recruitment of foster parents who may be eligible as 9 adoptive parents.

10 (2) When the office or designated local board determines that the 11 interests of a child in a foster care placement would be served thereby, 12 the office or designated local board may request a court review hearing 13 as provided for in section 43-1313.

14 (3) Due to the confidential and protected nature of child-specific 15 and family-specific information regarding mental and behavioral health 16 services, if such information is discussed at a local board meeting or a 17 portion of a meeting, the portion of the meeting at which such 18 information is discussed shall be exempt from the Open Meetings Act.

Sec. 13. Section 43-1309, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,20 2014, is amended to read:

43-1309 Upon the request of the office or designated local board, 21 22 any records pertaining to a case assigned to such local board shall be furnished to the office or designated local board by the Department of 23 24 <u>Health and Human Services, by</u>, or upon the request of the Department of 25 Health and Human Services, any records pertaining to a case assigned to the department, shall be furnished to the office or designated local 26 27 board or department by the agency charged with the child or any public official or employee of a political subdivision having relevant contact 28 with the child, or, upon court order, by the Office of Probation 29 Administration. Upon the request of the Foster Care Review Office office 30 or designated local board, and if such information is not obtainable 31

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elsewhere, the court having jurisdiction of the foster child shall
 release such information to the office or designated local board as the
 court deems necessary to determine the physical, psychological, and
 sociological circumstances of such foster child.

5 Sec. 14. Section 43-1313, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,
6 2014, is amended to read:

7 43-1313 When a child is in foster care placement, the court having jurisdiction over such child for the purposes of foster care placement 8 9 shall review the dispositional order for such child at least once every 10 six months. The court may reaffirm the order or direct other disposition of the child. Any review hearing by a court having jurisdiction over such 11 child for purposes of foster care placement shall be conducted on the 12 record as provided in sections 43-283 and 43-284, and any recommendations 13 of the office or designated local board concerning such child shall be 14 admissible in such proceedings if such recommendations have been provided 15 16 to all other parties of record included in the record. The court shall 17 review a case on the record more often than every six months and at any time following the original placement of the child if the office or local 18 19 board requests a hearing in writing specifying the reasons for the review. Members of the office or local board or its designated 20 representative may attend and be heard at any hearing conducted under 21 22 this section and may participate through counsel at the hearing with the 23 right to call and cross-examine witnesses and present arguments to the 24 court.

Sec. 15. (1) An Out-of-Home Data Pilot Project is created. The purpose of the project is to demonstrate, under the supervision of the Out-of-Home Data Pilot Project Advisory Group, how an existing state agency data system or systems currently used to account for children and juveniles in out-of-home placement could serve as a foundation for an independent, external oversight data warehouse. The pilot project shall be administered by the Foster Care Review Office and shall terminate on

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January 1, 2017.

-	<u>Sundary 1, 2017.</u>
2	<u>(2) The Out-of-Home Data Pilot Project Advisory Group is created.</u>
3	<u>The group shall include the Inspector General of Nebraska Child Welfare</u>
4	<u>or his or her designee, the State Court Administrator or his or her</u>
5	designee, the probation administrator of the Office of Probation
6	Administration or his or her designee, the executive director of the
7	Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice or his or her
8	designee, the Commissioner of Education or his or her designee, the
9	executive director of the Foster Care Review Office or his or her
10	<u>designee, a representative of the University of Nebraska at Omaha,</u>
11	Juvenile Justice Institute, the Chief Information Officer of the office
12	of Chief Information Officer or his or her designee, and one
13	representative each from the Division of Children and Family Services of
14	the Department of Health and Human Services, the Division of
15	<u>Developmental Disabilities of the Department of Health and Human</u>
16	Services, the Division of Behavioral Health of the Department of Health
17	and Human Services, and the Division of Medicaid and Long-Term Care of
18	the Department of Health and Human Services.

19 (3) The purposes of the Out-of-Home Data Pilot Project Advisory 20 Group are to oversee the Out-of-Home Data Pilot Project and to consider whether an independent, external oversight data warehouse could be 21 22 created by building on an existing state agency data system or systems 23 currently used to account for children and juveniles in out-of-home 24 placement. The group shall consider the features and capabilities of 25 existing state agency data systems that include: Information on children 26 and juveniles in out-of-home placement; where an independent, external 27 oversight data warehouse might be located within state government for 28 administrative purposes; possible costs associated with establishing and 29 operating an independent, external oversight data warehouse; challenges of data collection; barriers to data sharing; protection of confidential 30 31 information; restrictions on access to confidential information; and

other issues pertinent to the group's purpose. The group shall submit a 1 2 report electronically to the Legislature, the Governor, and the Supreme 3 Court by December 15, 2015. 4 (4) For purposes of this section, an independent, external oversight data warehouse means a data system which allows data analysis to: (a) 5 Account for children and juveniles in out-of-home placement regardless of 6 7 whether they entered out-of-home placement through the Department of Health and Human Services or through court involvement; (b) determine 8

9 whether out-of-home placement outcomes for children and juveniles meet 10 policy goals for children and juveniles in out-of-home placement; (c) 11 determine whether children are better off as a result of out-of-home 12 placement; (d) identify indicators for successful outcomes of out-of-home 13 placement; and (e) project future needs for children and juveniles in

14 <u>out-of-home placement.</u>

Sec. 16. Section 43-1318, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,
2014, is amended to read:

43-1318 Sections 43-1301 to 43-1321 <u>and section 15 of this act shall</u>
be known and may be cited as the Foster Care Review Act.

Sec. 17. Section 43-2404.02, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,20 2014, is amended to read:

43-2404.02 (1) There is created a separate and distinct budgetary 21 22 program within the commission to be known as the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program. Funding acquired from participation in the federal 23 24 act, state General Funds, and funding acquired from other sources which 25 may be used for purposes consistent with the Juvenile Services Act and the federal act shall be used to aid in the establishment and provision 26 27 of community-based services for juveniles who come in contact with the juvenile justice system. 28

(2)(a) Ten percent of the annual General Fund appropriation to the
 Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program, excluding administrative
 budget funds, shall be set aside for the development of a common data set

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and evaluation of the effectiveness of the Community-based Juvenile 1 2 Services Aid Program. The intent in creating this common data set is to allow for evaluation of the use of the funds and the effectiveness of the 3 4 programs or outcomes in the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid 5 Program. (b) The common data set shall be developed and maintained by the 6 7 commission and shall serve as a primary data collection site for any intervention funded by the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program 8 9 designed to serve juveniles and deter involvement in the formal juvenile 10 justice system. The commission shall work with agencies and programs to enhance existing data sets. To ensure that the data set permits 11 evaluation of recidivism and other measures, the commission shall work 12 13 with the Office of Probation Administration, juvenile diversion programs, law enforcement, the courts, and others to compile data that demonstrates 14 15 whether a youth has moved deeper into the juvenile justice system. The University of Nebraska at Omaha, Juvenile Justice Institute, shall assist 16 17 with the development of common definitions, variables, and training required for data collection and reporting into the common data set by 18 juvenile justice programs. The common data set maintained by the 19 commission shall be provided to the University of Nebraska at Omaha, 20 Juvenile Justice Institute, to assess the effectiveness of the Community-21 22 based Juvenile Services Aid Program.

(c) Providing the commission access to records and information for, 23 24 as well as the commission granting access to records and information 25 from, the common data set is not a violation of confidentiality provisions under any law, rule, or regulation if done in good faith for 26 purposes of evaluation. Records and documents, regardless of physical 27 28 form, that are obtained or produced or presented to the commission for the common data set are not public records for purposes of sections 29 30 84-712 to 84-712.09.

31 (d) The ten percent of the annual General Fund appropriation to the

1 Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program, excluding administrative budget funds, shall be appropriated as follows: In fiscal year 2015-16, 2 3 seven percent shall go to the commission for development of the common 4 data set and three percent shall go to the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Juvenile Justice Institute, for evaluation. In fiscal year 5 2016-17, six percent shall go to the commission for development and 6 maintenance of the common data set and four percent shall go to the 7 8 University of Nebraska at Omaha, Juvenile Justice Institute, for evaluation. Every fiscal year thereafter, beginning in fiscal year 9 2017-18, five percent shall go to the commission for development and 10 maintenance of the common data set and five percent shall go to the 11 University of Nebraska at Omaha, Juvenile Justice Institute, for 12 13 evaluation.

(e 2) The remaining funds in the annual General Fund appropriation 14 to the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program shall be apportioned 15 16 as aid in accordance with a formula established in rules and regulations adopted and promulgated by the commission. The formula shall be based on 17 the total number of residents per county and federally recognized or 18 state-recognized Indian tribe who are twelve years of age through 19 eighteen years of age and other relevant factors as determined by the 20 commission. The commission may require a local match of up to forty 21 percent from the county, multiple counties, federally recognized or 22 23 state-recognized Indian tribe or tribes, or any combination of the three which is receiving aid under such program. Any local expenditures for 24 community-based programs for juveniles may be applied toward such match 25 requirement. 26

(3)(a) In distributing funds provided under the Community-based
Juvenile Services Aid Program, aid recipients shall prioritize programs
and services that will divert juveniles from the juvenile justice system,
reduce the population of juveniles in juvenile detention and secure
confinement, and assist in transitioning juveniles from out-of-home

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1 placements.

(b) Funds received under the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid 2 Program shall be used exclusively to assist the aid recipient in the 3 implementation and operation of programs or the provision of services 4 identified in the aid recipient's comprehensive juvenile services plan, 5 programs for local planning and service coordination; 6 including assessment, and evaluation; diversion; alternatives to 7 screening, 8 detention; family support services; treatment services; truancy 9 prevention and intervention programs; pilot projects approved by the commission; payment of transportation costs to and from placements, 10 evaluations, or services; personnel when the personnel are aligned with 11 evidence-based treatment principles, programs, or practices; contracting 12 with other state agencies or private organizations that provide evidence-13 based treatment or programs; preexisting programs that are aligned with 14 evidence-based practices or best practices; and other services that will 15 16 positively impact juveniles and families in the juvenile justice system.

(c) Funds received under the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid 17 Program shall not be used for the following: Construction of secure 18 detention facilities, secure youth treatment facilities, or secure youth 19 confinement facilities; capital construction or the lease or acquisition 20 of facilities; programs, services, treatments, evaluations, or other 21 preadjudication services that are not based on or grounded in evidence-22 based practices, principles, and research, except that the commission may 23 24 approve pilot projects that authorize the use of such aid; or office equipment, office supplies, or office space. 25

(d) Any aid not distributed to counties under this subsection shall be retained by the commission to be distributed on a competitive basis under the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program for a county, multiple counties, federally recognized or state-recognized Indian tribe or tribes, or any combination of the three demonstrating additional need in the funding areas identified in this subsection.

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1 (e) If a county, multiple counties, or a federally recognized or 2 state-recognized Indian tribe or tribes is denied aid under this section 3 or receives no aid under this section, the entity may request an appeal 4 pursuant to the appeal process in rules and regulations adopted and 5 promulgated by the commission. The commission shall establish appeal and 6 hearing procedures by December 15, 2014. The commission shall make appeal 7 and hearing procedures available on its web site.

(4)(a) Any recipient of aid under the Community-based Juvenile 8 9 Services Aid Program shall electronically file an annual report as required by rules and regulations adopted and promulgated by the 10 commission. Any program funded through the Community-based Juvenile 11 Services Aid Program that served juveniles shall report data on the 12 13 individual youth served. Any program that is not directly serving youth shall include program-level data. In either case, data collected shall 14 include, but not be limited to, the following: The The report shall 15 16 include, but not be limited to, the type of juvenile service, how the 17 service met the goals of the comprehensive juvenile services plan, demographic information on the total number of juveniles served, program 18 19 outcomes success rates, the total number of juveniles served, and the number of juveniles who completed the program or intervention sent to 20 secure juvenile detention or residential treatment and secure 21 22 confinement, and a listing of the expenditures for detention, residential 23 treatment, and nonresidential treatment.

(b) Any recipient of aid under the Community-based Juvenile Services
 Aid Program shall be assisted by the University of Nebraska at Omaha,
 Juvenile Justice Institute, in reporting in the common data set, as set
 forth in the rules and regulations adopted and promulgated by the
 commission. Community-based aid utilization and evaluation data shall be
 stored and maintained by the commission.

30 (c) Evaluation of the use of funds and the evidence of the
 31 effectiveness of the programs shall be completed by the University of

1 <u>Nebraska at Omaha, Juvenile Justice Institute, specifically:</u>

2 (i) The varying rates of recidivism, as defined by rules and
3 regulations adopted and promulgated by the commission, and other measures
4 for juveniles participating in community-based programs; and

5 (ii) Whether juveniles are sent to staff secure or secure juvenile
6 detention after participating in a program funded by the Community-based
7 Juvenile Services Aid Program.

(5) The commission shall report annually to the Governor and the 8 9 Legislature on the distribution and use of funds for aid appropriated 10 under the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program. The report shall include, but not be limited to, an aggregate report of the use of the 11 Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program funds, including the types 12 13 of juvenile services and programs that were funded, demographic information on the total number of juveniles served, program success 14 rates, the total number of juveniles sent to secure juvenile detention or 15 16 residential treatment and secure confinement, and a listing of the expenditures of all counties and federally recognized or state-recognized 17 detention, residential treatment, 18 Indian tribes for and secure 19 confinement. The report submitted to the Legislature shall be submitted electronically. 20

(6) The commission shall adopt and promulgate rules and regulations for the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program in consultation with the Director of the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program, the Director of Juvenile Diversion Programs, the Office of Probation Administration, the Nebraska Association of County Officials, and the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Juvenile Justice Institute. The rules and regulations shall include, but not be limited to:

(a) The required elements of a comprehensive juvenile services plan
and planning process;

30 (b) The Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program formula,
 31 review process, match requirements, and fund distribution. The

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1 distribution process shall ensure a conflict of interest policy;

2 (c) A distribution process for funds retained under subsection (3)3 of this section;

4 (d) A plan for evaluating the effectiveness of plans and programs5 receiving funding;

6 (e) A reporting process for aid recipients; and

7 (f) A reporting process for the commission to the Governor and 8 Legislature. The report shall be made electronically to the Governor and 9 the Legislature; and -

10 (g) Requirements regarding the use of the common data set.

11 Sec. 18. Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 12 17, and 20 of this act become operative three calendar months after the 13 adjournment of this legislative session. The other sections of this act 14 become operative on their effective date.

Sec. 19. Original section 43-1318, Revised Statutes Cumulative
Supplement, 2014, is repealed.

Sec. 20. Original sections 29-1816, 43-245, 43-246.01, 43-247,
43-297.01, 43-2,129, 43-1301, 43-1302, 43-1303, 43-1304, 43-1308,
43-1309, 43-1313, and 43-2404.02, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,
2014, are repealed.

21 Sec. 21. Since an emergency exists, this act takes effect when 22 passed and approved according to law.

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