

HB 1965 -- STATE DEBT OWED BY NONCUSTODIAL PARENTS

SPONSOR: Zerr

This bill changes the laws regarding state debt owed by noncustodial parents. The bill requires the Department of Social Services to establish a pilot program to allow noncustodial parents to reduce the amount of state debt owed based on completion of the program. The amount of state debt must not be reduced by more than \$2,000. The program must not change the noncustodial parent's monthly child support obligations or compromise any arrears owed to the custodial parent or any spousal support arrears and must not incur any direct cost to the state through general revenue or any other funding source. The goals of the program must include empowering the noncustodial parents with the necessary resources to achieve gainful employment and encouraging noncustodial parents to be engaged with their children and to take financial responsibility for their children's well-being. A noncustodial parent must be removed from the program if at any time the department determines that he or she is not demonstrating good faith efforts to achieve these goals, must not receive a reduction in the amount of state debt owed, and must not be allowed to reenter the program.

The department must establish rules and regulations implementing the provisions of the bill within a year of the bill's effective date, and the department must submit a report to the General Assembly based upon the results submitted by participating organizations two years and five months following the establishment of rules that includes information as specified in the bill.

The provisions of the bill will expire on August 28, 2020.

This bill is similar to HB 1797 (2016) and HB 1047 (2015).