



## Report on Public Policy Position

**Name of Section:**

Family Law Section

**Contact Person:**

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**Bill Number:**

**HB 4736** (Byrum) Human services; children's services; procedure for placement of children in a foster home; expand to give special consideration to relatives. Amends sec. 4a of 1994 PA 203 (MCL 722.954a).

**Date position was adopted:**

June 2, 2007

**Process used to take the ideological position:**

Position adopted after discussion and vote at a scheduled meeting

**Number of members in the decision-making body:**

21

**Number who voted in favor and opposed to the position:**

18 Voted for position

0 Voted against position

0 Abstained from vote

3 Did not vote

**Position:**

Oppose

**Explanation of the position, including any recommended amendments:**

This bill would require the child placement agency to give preference to placing the child in a home sharing the same religion as the child's previous family. Current law allows a placement agency to take culture and religion into consideration in placing a child. This bill, giving religion special consideration, would violate the Metzenbaum Multi-ethnic Placement Act. The Metzenbaum legislation was passed in response to restrictive placement criteria that left children lingering in foster care because agencies could not satisfactorily match religious, cultural and racial criteria for the children. Violating the Metzenbaum Multi-ethnic Placement Act might endanger Federal funding and would certainly lead to confusion and conflicting mandates. The Council opposes this bill.

**The text (may be provided by hyperlink) of any legislation, court rule, or administrative regulation that is the subject of or referenced in this report:**

<http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?2007-HB-4736>