

HB 2075-S - DIGEST

(DIGEST OF PROPOSED 1ST SUBSTITUTE)

Finds that it is not in the best interest of the child to delay action on a parent who has not indicated any desire to maintain contact with his or her child.

Provides that the state should file the petition for termination to allow a court to review the case and decide the appropriate course of action. This may encourage the parent to step forward and contact the child or indicate a willingness to become involved in the child's life. This will begin the process of connecting the child to the parent possibly years sooner than would otherwise be the case. However, if the parent truly does not wish to be involved in the life of the child, the court should have the opportunity to terminate the parental rights of that parent and move the case toward permanency.

Provides that a petition may allege the following: (1) Fifteen months have elapsed since the child was removed from the home;

(2) The parent has been given the opportunity to contact the child and engage in a relationship with the child; and

(3) The parent of the child has indicated an unwillingness to care for the child or has failed to have contact with the child.