

Bill Seeks to Protect Abused Infants



April 14, 2017 – Protecting Delaware's most vulnerable citizens is the goal of a bipartisan bill introduced in the General Assembly this week.

[House Bill 140](#) would bring Delaware into compliance the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act. That law, among other things, sets standards for child abuse and neglect and provides assistance to help states deal with those issues.

The Delaware measure would satisfy a federal requirement for creating procedures to address the needs of newly born infants affected by substance abuse, withdrawal symptoms, or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. It includes a mandate for health care providers involved in the delivery or care of affected infants to notify child protection services.

Upon receiving notification, state officials would have to determine if an investigation was warranted; develop a "Plan of Safe Care" for the infant; and ensure the plan was implemented and followed.

This bill, to be known as "Aiden's Law," is sponsored by State Rep. Melanie George Smith (D-Bear-Newark).

Among the members of the House Republican Caucus co-sponsoring the legislation are: State Reps. Ruth Briggs King (R-Georgetown), Joe Miro (R-Pike Creek Valley), Mike Ramone (R-Pike Creek South), and Dave Wilson (R-Cedar Creek Hundred).

The bill is pending action in the House Judiciary Committee.