



Eric J. Holcomb, Governor  
Eric Miller, Director

*"Children will live in safe, healthy and supportive families and communities."*

*If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, call the Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline at (800) 800-5556.*

May 6, 2024

Interim Study Committee on Courts and the Judiciary

Dear Committee:

This communication shall serve as a letter of support for the establishment of an additional court in Vigo County, Indiana. Vigo County continues to have some of the highest rates of Child in Need of Services cases in the State. In the first quarter of 2024, Vigo County has seen a significant increase in the filing of Child in Need of Services cases. The Department of Child Services, Vigo County Local Office, has worked with the Vigo Circuit and Vigo Juvenile Courts to attempt to provide more time on the docket to address the high volume of cases for more than a year. Despite making changes, both dockets continue to require extensive time and both often hear cases outside of normal business hours. It is my belief that an additional court would ultimately lead to more timely permanency for the children of Indiana.

Sincerely,

*Mary C. Pierce*

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Indiana Department of Child Services  
Chief Counsel Region 8, Vigo, Sullivan,  
Clay, Vermillion and Parke Counties



**About Indiana DCS:** *The Indiana Department of Child Services leads the state's response to allegations of child abuse and neglect and facilitates child support payments. We consider the needs and values of all we serve in our efforts to protect children while keeping families together whenever possible.*

