



State of Arizona

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 29, 2014

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Governor Brewer Signs Landmark Child Safety Reform Legislation

Creates Department of Child Safety, Ensures Transparency & Accountability

PHOENIX – Fulfilling her cornerstone policy priority for the 2014 legislative session, Governor Jan Brewer today signed into law the most significant and meaningful child safety reform in Arizona history.

The legislation, passed this week during a special session of the Arizona Legislature, statutorily creates and funds the new Department of Child Safety (DCS) – a permanent, stand-alone agency with the express mission of safeguarding Arizona's abused and neglected children – and mandates transparency and accountability. Director Charles Flanagan, who has been invaluable in the state's efforts to revamp our child safety system, will lead the new agency.

Statement from Governor Brewer

"It is a momentous day for Arizona, as we take the boldest and most meaningful step in state history to reform and replace our problem-plagued child welfare system. This new agency, under the devoted, tireless and passionate leadership of Charles Flanagan, is a critical step forward in creating a child safety system that lives up to its name and mission.

"With this historic legislation, we begin to reverse a longstanding crisis and implement long-lasting change. Through necessary resources, safeguards, checks and balances and oversight – as well as a clearly-defined core mission of child safety – there will be no room for excuses, secrets or faceless decision makers. There will be no more mixed messages and competing priorities. Finally, Arizona will have a child safety system with the capability and culture to protect our children.

"Certainly, a system that has been broken for decades will take time to repair. Implementing true and lasting reform in any agency – especially one with such a vital mission and vulnerable population – will take time. But for the first time in state history, we are on a clear path to a successful child safety system that will not fail in its mission. I thank the bi-partisan Child Safety Reform Workgroup, the CARE Team, the stakeholders and advocates, the Legislature and everyone who has played a part in this crucial and overdue cause. This is only the beginning, and it will be incumbent upon future governors and legislators to continue our remarkable progress. But today, we can take pride in knowing that we made history – and we made a difference."

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