



MEDIA ADVISORY...

From State Representative Sara Feigenholtz

For Immediate Release:

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For More Information:

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Feigenholtz, Child Welfare Committee to Hold Hearing Examining DCFS and Death of Child

*Hearing to Cover Office of Inspector General Report on DCFS and Death of Child
Ta'naja Barnes*

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – State Rep. Sara Feigenholtz, Chair of the Adoption and Child Welfare Committee, has scheduled a subject matter hearing to examine the tragic case of Ta'naja Barnes, a two-year-old child from Decatur who died February 11, 2019 despite DCFS and community provider interventions. DCFS will respond to questions at the hearing on Tuesday, March 5 at 2 p.m. in room 122B in the Capitol.

“Ta'naja's death is yet another tragedy we must examine. We have to do better for our vulnerable kids,” Feigenholtz said. “The hearing will be an opportunity to question the Interim DCFS Director and walk through where the gaps were surrounding Ta'naja's death. Our goal is to work toward a system and avoid future tragedies like this from happening.”

Authorities had previously removed Barnes from her mother's custody in 2018 following an abuse investigation. Barnes was returned to her mother's care in August of 2018 and found dead February 11, 2019.

Police at the scene reported an abusive and uninhabitable living environment at the home upon their arrival.

“Child protection is the core mission of DCFS. A thorough investigation of this tragedy is in order— we have to do better,” said Feigenholtz

The Office of the DCFS Inspector General will discuss their annual report and recommendations. That full report can be found here:

https://www2.illinois.gov/dcfs/aboutus/OIG/Documents/OIG_Annual_Report_2019.pdf

Who: Chairperson of the Child & Welfare Committee State Rep. Sara Feigenholtz, Department of Children and Family Services Director Debra Dyer-Webster and other staff members

What: Subject Matter Hearing: Inspector General, DCFS Report and Child Neglect

When: Tuesday, March 5 2 p.m.

Where: Room 122B, Capitol Building

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