

Approved: March 19, 2012

(Date)

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE CORRECTIONS AND JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Pat Colloton at 1:30 pm on Wednesday, January 11, 2012 in room 144 S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:  
Charles Roth

Committee staff present:

Sean Ostrow, Office of the Revisor of Statutes  
Jason Thompson, Office of the Revisor of Statutes  
Lauren Douglass, KS Legislative Research Department  
Robert Allison-Gallimore, KS Legislative Research Department

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Commissioner Curtis Whitten, Juvenile Justice Authority  
Deputy Commissioner Dennis Casarona, Juvenile Justice Authority  
Gina Meier-Hummel, Director Children and Family Services, Department of SRS

Others in attendance:

See attached list.

Chairperson Colloton opened the floor for bill introductions and called on State Representative Carlin. Representative Carlin made a request for a bill regarding recording the death or disappearance of a child.

***Representative Melody McCray-Miller moved to adopt the bill request of Representative Carlin as a Committee bill. Representative Melanie Meier seconded. Motion carried.***

Chairperson Colloton recognized Megan Henry, Attorney General's Office, for a bill request. Ms. Henry requested a bill to modify the statute of limitations on certain crimes against children.

***Representative Brookens moved to accept the bill request from Ms. Henry representing the Attorney General's Office as a Committee bill. Representative Moxley seconded. Motion carried.***

Ms. Henry had an additional request on behalf of the Attorney General's Office. The request is for a bill that would allow the courts to modify "no contact orders".

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***Representative Smith made a motion to accept the bill request to allow courts to modify the “no contact orders”. Representative Pauls seconded. Motion carried***

Chairperson Colloton informed the Committee that on Tuesday of next week the Committee would be having a joint meeting with House Health and House Fed and State on the issue of Human Trafficking. The meeting will be at 1:30 pm in the Old Supreme Court Room. She also stated that the Committee Secretary, Jackie, would be emailing information she would like for them to review before the meeting.

Chairperson Colloton called on Curtis Whitten, Commissioner, Juvenile Justice Authority, (JJA), to give the Committee an overview of what has been happening at the Juvenile Justice Authority including some major changes. Commissioner Whittenn provided copies of his testimony for the Committee (Attachment 1&2). He opened by stating JJA has addressed some of the concerns of the interim committee at the facility in Topeka. He was glad to report that changes had been made to allow accessibility to dietary, the gym, and vocational training programs. He stated that seven girls had enrolled in the auto mechanics program and JJA was looking for more opportunities to add to their vocational training programs. Commissioner Whitten addressed the questions and concerns of the Committee during his presentation. It was noted that JJA is striving for consistency in their training programs in both their facilities, in Topeka and Larnerd. The Commissioner touched on the mentoring programs and stated the program is moving forward with success.

Upon the completion of the comments made by Commissioner Whitten, Chairperson Colloton introduced Dennis Casarona, Deputy Commissioner, JJA, to give his testimony (Attachment 1& 2, also) regarding separation efforts to create separation between Juvenile offender youth assigned to JJA custody from the Child In Need of Care (CINC) youth population ordered into SRS custody. He stated this has been an ongoing process with the underlying goal of creating a physical separation in out-of-home placements between the JJA and SRS custodial populations. Since the initial discussions between the JJA and SRS regarding the separation of youth in JJA custody and youth in SRS custody in out-of-home placements, the process has continued towards the primary goal of establishing safer environments in out-of-home placements by eliminating the intermingling of juvenile offenders with non-offending CINC youth. In addition to this primary goal, both agencies are working together to optimize the proximity of youth placements to their home communities as a secondary goal, and to give due consideration to the stability of current system providers as the tertiary outcome. In closing, he stated that currently JJA and SRS staff are working together to develop an initial draft placement model for three of the primary residential placement types: Youth Residential Centers (YC II), Transitional Living Program (TLP), and Emergency Shelters (ES). The purpose of the model is to provide a

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framework to review and discuss with providers in a meeting tentatively planned to occur in late February or early March. With this input from providers, a final model and implementation plan will be developed. Deputy Commissioner Casarona addressed the questions and concerns of the Committee during his testimony with a lengthy discussion following his completion.

Next, Chairperson Colloton introduced Gina Meier-Hummel, Director of Children and Family Services, SRS, to give her testimony. (Attachment 2) She stated the proposal to transfer programs has been tabled pending a study of the matter. SRS would not be able to provide an accurate financial analysis until a study is completed. SRS & JJA have asked Chairman Reggie Robinson at the Kansas Advisory Group to create an ad hoc committee to put together a proposal that will allow them to create a better interface with JJA and SRS. She went on to say that the ad hoc committee would include representation from a wide range of interests. The study will include recommendations on how best to make improvements in the current system and alignment, if any, that would better serve Kansas children and their families.

A question and answer session followed.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m. with the next meeting scheduled for January 12, 2012 at 1:30 pm in room 144 S.

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