

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

1 State of Arkansas
2 86th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2007
4

As Engrossed: S3/26/07

A Bill

SENATE BILL 921

5 By: *Senators Wilkins, Brown*
6
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF
10 STATE AGENCIES' RULES AND PROCEDURES THAT RELATE
11 TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OF INCARCERATED PARENTS;
12 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
13

Subtitle

14 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR A COMPREHENSIVE
15 REVIEW OF STATE AGENCIES' RULES AND
16 PROCEDURES THAT RELATE TO CHILDREN AND
17 FAMILIES OF INCARCERATED PARENTS.
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21 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
22

23 *SECTION 1. Legislative intent.*

24 *The General Assembly finds:*

25 *(1) Arkansas is the home of approximately fifty-one thousand*
26 *(51,000) children who have experienced parental incarceration during their*
27 *childhoods;*

28 *(2) An additional estimated thirty-five thousand (35,000)*
29 *children have a parent under some type of criminal justice sanction;*

30 *(3) Children whose parents are incarcerated or sanctioned have a*
31 *vulnerability toward future incarceration due to the lack of support and*
32 *services during their parent's absence;*

33 *(4) The life events of these children are permeated with risk*
34 *factors of poverty, low educational attainment, coming from communities of*
35 *violence, and coping with domestic violence in their homes;*

36 *(5) Grief, loss, sadness, anxiety, depression, and post-*



1 traumatic stress reactions are pervasive among these children; and

2 (6) These children are seldom considered in the development of
3 policies concerning, law enforcement, judiciary, parole, probation, public
4 defenders, prosecutors, and child welfare.

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6 SECTION 2. Governor's Commission for Children and Families with
7 Incarcerated Parents.

8 (a) There is created the "Governor's Commission for Children and
9 Families with Incarcerated Parents."

10 (b) The commission shall consist of thirteen (13) members appointed by
11 the Governor as follows:

12 (1)(A) Two (2) members of the commission shall be community
13 leaders or professionals that have served children of the incarcerated and
14 their families for more than twelve (12) years

15 (B) Members appointed under subdivision (b)(1) of this
16 section shall serve as cochairs of the commission;

17 (2) Two (2) members shall be adult children of incarcerated or
18 previously incarcerated parents;

19 (3) Two (2) members shall be parents who have been incarcerated
20 within the past twenty-four (24) months;

21 (4) Two (2) members shall be kinship caregivers of children of
22 incarcerated parents;

23 (5) One (1) member shall be a parent educator of incarcerated
24 parents within the Department of Correction;

25 (6) One (1) member shall be a mental health provider of specific
26 services to children of the incarcerated;

27 (7) One (1) member shall be a court appointed special advocate
28 volunteer with experience serving foster children of incarcerated parents;

29 (8) One (1) member shall be a policy analyst of the Governor's
30 office; and

31 (9) One (1) member shall be a member of the State Child Abuse
32 and Neglect Prevention Board or the member's designee.

33 (c)(1) Members appointed under subdivision (b)(1) of this section
34 shall serve as cochairs of the commission.

35 (2) The commission shall meet as necessary at the determination
36 of the cochairs.

1 (d) A quorum of the commission shall consist of seven (7) members.

2 (e) Members shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

3 (f) If a vacancy occurs on the commission, a successor shall be
4 appointed in the same manner as provided in the initial appointment.

5 (g) The members of the commission shall serve without compensation and
6 shall not receive per diem, mileage, or stipends.

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8 SECTION 3. Filings with the Governor's Commission for Children and
9 Families with Incarcerated Parents.

10 On or before October 1, 2008, the following shall provide a written
11 review of their policies and procedures to the Governor's Commission for
12 Children and Families with Incarcerated Parents:

13 (1) The Department of Correction;

14 (2) The Department of Community Correction;

15 (3) The Division of Children and Family Services of the
16 Department of Health and Human Services; and

17 (4) Representatives of all state and local law enforcement
18 agencies.

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20 SECTION 4. Powers and duties.

21 The Governor's Commission for Children and Families with Incarcerated
22 Parents shall:

23 (1) Review the reports provided under Section 3 of this act;

24 (2) Consider the impact of the policies and procedures contained
25 in the reports on the children of arrested, incarcerated, or paroled parents
26 and probationers; and

27 (3) Make recommendations to the entities filing the reports for
28 policy and improvements and changes that will:

29 (A) Result in improved well-being for children;

30 (B) Increase family ties between a child and his or her
31 incarcerated parent; and

32 (C) Lower the risk that the children of incarcerated
33 parents will be incarcerated themselves at some point.

34
35 /s/ Brown
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