

EXHIBIT B

MINUTES

SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON AGING, CHILDREN AND YOUTH LEGISLATIVE AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Meeting Jointly

Thursday, March 20, 2014, 1:30 p.m.

Room 130, State Capitol

Little Rock, Arkansas

The Senate Interim Committee on Children and Youth, and the House Interim Committee on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs; met Thursday, March 20, 2014 at 1:30 p.m. in Room 130 at the State Capitol in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Committee members present were: *Senators* Stephanie Flowers, Chair; Linda Chesterfield, and Jane English. *Representatives* David Meeks, Chair; Charles Armstrong, Ken Bragg, Jody Dickinson, Deborah Ferguson, John Payton, and Sue Scott.

Non-Committee members present were: *Senators* Bruce Maloch, Jason Rapert, David Sanders, and Eddie Joe Williams. *Representatives* Scott Baltz, Jeremy Gillam, Sheilla Lampkin, Andrea Lea, Kelley Linck, Stephanie Malone, Mar, McElroy, Micah S. Neal, Betty Overbey, Mary L. Slinkard,

Senator Flowers called the meeting to order.

Consideration to Approve Minutes of January 27, 2014 [EXHIBIT B]

Without objection, the minutes were approved.

Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Youth Services (DYS), Quarterly Performance Report (QPR), October-December 2013 [EXHIBIT C]

Mr. Tracy Steele, Director, DYS, was recognized to present the QPR. He noted the number of youths committed to DYS during October-December 2013 increased to 721. Mr. Steele stated juvenile commitments are down 19.5% from 2012, and down 2.3% from the July-September 2013 quarter. He said public order commitments involving truancy and possession of weapons on school property are up 70%. DYS has received community-based funds to help educate youth offenders and their parents regarding violence prevention and the dangers of firearms. Mr. Steele said juvenile court judges are aware of the negative impact detention centers have on youth and are using alternative programs to divert low to moderate risk youth from entering juvenile detention facilities. Mr. Steele noted that through electronic monitoring, youth offenders with more serious issues have a higher success rate of rehabilitation if they receive treatment services while staying in their home and in their community. Mr. Steele invited the

Committee to tour the Arkansas Juvenile Assessment and Treatment Center (AJATC) to discuss ideas on reducing the number of youths being committed to detention centers.

Senator Flowers requested DYS provide a chart that lists a description of each violation by judicial district and by county. The committee was directed to page 16 of the QPR for the information as requested by judicial districts and the agency committed to providing the committee with this information by county.

Senator Chesterfield requested DYS provide the number of DYS students who have received workforce certification. Mr. Steele agreed to provide this information.

Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Youth Services (DYS), 2013 Annual Education Report [EXHIBIT D]

Mr. Steele introduced Mr. Brett Smith, Superintendent of Schools, DYS, to provide an overview of the DYS system of education as it relates to general education, special education, and vocational education. All DYS general education and special education curriculum is certified by the Arkansas Department of Education. Mr. Smith stated that DYS students receive education instruction and homework within two days of intake. DYS submits transcripts to school districts for students transitioning back to their home district. All DYS teachers are highly qualified and hold Arkansas teaching certificates in the field of service. DYS vocational education is expanding to include welding and additional life-skills programs. Mr. Smith said DYS primary goal is for each youth to return to his school at the appropriate grade level and graduate, attend college or technical school, and become a productive member of their community. DYS facilities receive annual allocations totaling \$2.5 million. Annual DYS Education expenditures total \$3.2 million.

Senator Flowers asked Mr. Smith to explain how DYS formulated 94% of total youth committed to DYS with a mental health issue? Mr. Smith stated that every juvenile placed in DYS receives a mental health assessment and a behavior assessment done by UAMS upon intake. Mr. Steele explained that UAMS makes the assessment and recommendation. UAMS gives the recommendation to DYS or to a DYS Provider who will then contract services out to mental health professionals based on the recommendations. Mr. Steele clarified that although the majority of the youth are classified with mental health issues the Juvenile Justice System classifies behavior issues as mental health issues. He said of the over seven hundred juveniles committed to DYS or homebound with ankle monitoring devices, 94% have been assessed with a mental health issue. Mr. Steele said UAMS assessments cost approximately \$500,000.

Senator Flowers asked for clarification that Exhibit C lists the total number of all youth committed whether they are in a DYS facility or at home. Mr. Steele responded that Exhibit C is the total number of youth committed to all 6 facilities around the state.

Representative Armstrong requested DYS provide the total dollar amount spent for the education of juveniles committed to DYS.

Arkansas State Police, Crimes Against Children Division (CACD), Annual Report 2013 and Oversight Report, October-December 2013 [EXHIBIT E-1, E-2]

Captain Ron Stayton, Commander, Crimes Against Children Division, (CACD), was recognized. Captain Stayton explained in the 2013 annual report, CADC received 62,024 child abuse calls. Thirty-one thousand one hundred and twenty eight (31,128) calls were accepted for investigation and 5,409 cases were investigated for severe maltreatment. There were 15,520 calls placed to the Hot Line that were considered invalid due to duplicate reports or not meeting maltreatment criteria.

The report indicated a substantiation rate of 42% (2,379) of CACD investigations with true findings. CACD closed 5,667 cases in 2013. The total number of calls received from mandated reporters for the quarter totaled 4,205. Captain Stayton noted that many CACD cases are worked jointly with local law enforcement. The last section of the quarterly report lists the number of cases submitted to prosecuting attorneys by judicial district including the type of offense, the number of cases submitted and filed. Captain Stayton explained that some of the cases submitted to prosecuting attorneys involved a minor, as the perpetrator.

Captain Stayton invited the Committee members to the Arkansas Legislative Council-Game and Fish State Subcommittee meeting to be held at the Arkansas State Police Headquarters on April 23, 2014, at 10:00 a.m.

DHS, Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Rule for Review [EXHIBIT G]

Ms. Christin Harper, Policy Manager, Division of Children and Family Services, was recognized. Ms. Harper explained DCFS has two revised rules for review:

1. Revised Rule POLICY I-E: Official Record Keeping & Access To Official Records: which will add specific reference to Differential Response files in record retention schedule, and
2. Revised Rule POLICY II-C: Differential Response (DR): modifying initiation definition to require face-to-face contact with the victim child and at least one parent/caregiver within 72 hours of receipt of initial hotline report as opposed to face-to-face with all household members, etc.

Without objection the rules were reviewed.

Without further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.