

# Exhibit B.2

## MINUTES SENATE INTERIM CHILDREN AND YOUTH August 15, 2012

The Senate Interim Children and Youth Committee met on Wednesday, August 15, 2012 in Heber Springs, Arkansas at 2:00 p.m., in the Student Services/Administration Building, Entergy Room, 101 River Crest Drive, Heber Springs, Arkansas.

Committee members present were: Senator Missy Irvin; Chair and Eddie Joe Williams. Other legislators present: Representatives Josh Johnston, Loy Mauch and Gary Stubblefield,

Senator Missy Irvin called the meeting to order.

Young Life, Lee Ducote, Area Director

Mr. Lee Ducote was recognized, he stated that Young Life began in 1938 in Austin, Texas founded by Pastor Jim Rayburn whose mission was to minister to high school students who were not involved in the church. It has since grown into the largest Christian organization in the world with 4,000 employees, in 90 countries, with 50,000 volunteers who minister to 2 million youth. This organization was founded on the principles of the five "C's" as listed below:

- **Camping**- during the summer
- **Club**-weekly meetings
- **Campaigners**-a small group of leaders that commit time to kids
- **Contact Work**-volunteers go to where the kids are
- **Committee**-a group of adults that help either financially or through prayer

Young Life began in Heber Springs 7 years ago. Mr. Ducote, a full time employee of Young Life, started a middle school program called Wild Life. Young Life Programs include:

- High School-Traditional Young Life
- Middle School-Wild Life
- Mentally and Physically Challenged high school kids-Capernaum
- Teen age moms-Young Lives
- College students- Young Life
- Military Community Youth Ministries (MCYM)-In partnership with Youth for Christ and Teen Life and supports all branches of the military on 44 bases, nationally and internationally

The mission of Young Life is to introduce every adolescent to Jesus Christ and to help them develop that relationship. Last year in Heber Springs, 100 middle school kids, 300 high school kids and 12 college kids came into the program. Funding for Young Life comes from the community.

The C.A.L.L., Children of Arkansas Loved for a Lifetime, Melissa Choate, Area Coordinator Ms. Melissa Choate was recognized and introduced Mr. Gary Phillips from Fulton County. Ms. Choate said the people involved with the C.A.L.L. is what makes it successful. The C.A.L.L. is based on a belief that every child deserves to be loved and cared for. There is a huge need in Cleburne County with 60 children from the county entering in foster care annually and statewide about 7,500. This program originated in Pulaski County approximately 4 years ago. Over 500 children in Arkansas are waiting for a "forever" family. The mission of the program is to educate, equip, encourage through the body of Christ,

and to provide a future and hope for children in foster care. To fulfill this mission, we present to churches, clubs and organizations, train local volunteers and families to fulfill their roles and share the need with others. Monthly information meetings are hosted at local churches, foster family support group meetings, and special events to support and keep families together. Monthly leadership meetings, and bi-annual advisory board meetings are also held. We are currently working to improve the process of mentoring families.

Ms. Ashley Herring who is a foster parent said when the C.A.L.L came to Cleburne County, there was already a connection in the community with the Department of Human Services, Division of Children and Family Services(DCFS) before the C.A.L.L She noted that in their area there were a number of churches willing to host trainings, and hold meetings to get the word out. She stated that the C.A.L.L bridges the gap between DCFS and families. The CALL's vision is for every child in Arkansas to have a loving home and a community eager to care for them.

Senator Irvin asked when did the C.A.L.L get started and how many counties participate. Ms. Choate said it started in Pulaski County in 2007 and is currently in 23 counties, the map of the counties is on the web site ( [www.TheCALLinArkansas.org](http://www.TheCALLinArkansas.org)). Approximately 4,000 children are currently in state custody, and this year, more than 7,000 will spend time in foster care. Since January 2012 through July 2012: 204 families have been recruited, 176 families have been trained and 117 families have been certified.

Senator Irvin said there are 4,000 children in foster care. The solution is to get more foster care families, but we are not effectively doing this as a state. The state cannot always solve all problems, which is why it is important to have organizations like the C.A.L.L to bridge the gap. As legislators, we need to seek out and find those solutions and create partnerships.

Senator Irvin asked about the high burn-out and turn-over rate among DCFS Family Service Workers. Ms. Janell Switzer, DCFS Family Service Worker Supervisor, Cleburne County was recognized and stated that in smaller counties it may be due to large case workloads, the economy and/or people moving.

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Wallisa Brown, CASA Volunteer Coordinator (Fulton, Izard, Stone and Independence Counties)

Ms. Brown was recognized and said the mission of CASA is to provide a voice for children who come in contact with the judicial system either because of abuse, neglect, or because they are in foster care. CASA volunteers visit with all parties involved in a case to be able to provide more information to the representatives and the judge regarding what is happening in that child's life and what their specific needs are. Volunteer training consists of extensive training in courtroom procedures, effective advocacy and confidentiality requirements. Volunteers work closely with coordinators, report all findings to the judge and are occasionally asked to testify in court.

Water Safety and Education for Children and Youth, David Moore, United States Corps of Engineers  
Mr. David Moore was recognized and stated that Greers Ferry Lake offers a multitude of recreational opportunities to more than 6.8 million visitors annually with a fee collection total of over \$1.2 million. He noted that the Corps oversees 14 recreational areas with over 1,200 campsites. The mission of the Water Safety Program is to effectively reduce water related injuries and deaths by using proactive regional approaches and energizing innovative ideas to educate the public on the importance of water safety.

A water safety campaign encouraging everyone to wear life jackets is conducted each year in area schools targeting 4<sup>th</sup> graders because this age seems the most receptive to the message.

Senator Irvin recognized Ms. Connie Hickman-Tanner, Director of Juvenile Division of Courts. Ms. Hickman-Tanner announced that Chief Justice Hannah has created the first commission that deals with children's issues and noted that the first meeting will be held Friday, August 17, 2012.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

The members and guests dispersed for a tour of the ASU-HS campus.