

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

SR 31

4
5 By: Senator Broadway

6
7
8 **SENATE RESOLUTION**

9 REQUESTING THE SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON
10 CHILDREN AND YOUTH AND THE HOUSE INTERIM
11 COMMITTEE ON AGING, CHILDREN AND YOUTH,
12 LEGISLATIVE AND MILITARY AFFAIRS TO STUDY WAYS TO
13 IMPROVE THE STATE'S JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM FOR
14 YOUTH COMMITTED TO THE DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES
15 OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

16
17 **Subtitle**

18 REQUESTING A STUDY FOR WAYS TO IMPROVE
19 THE STATE'S JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM FOR
20 YOUTH.

21
22
23 WHEREAS, there is cause to evaluate needed reforms of the state's
24 juvenile justice system to more effectively and efficiently serve youth
25 committed to the Division of Youth Services of the Department of Health and
26 Human Services and to identify best practices that will reduce unnecessary
27 reliance on large juvenile correctional facilities and promote the
28 development of an appropriate continuum of community-based treatment
29 alternatives in the least restrictive settings possible consistent with
30 public safety; and

31
32 WHEREAS, an interim study proposal is required for the retention of
33 independent expert consultants to assist the Division of Youth Services of
34 the Department of Health and Human Services to conduct comprehensive needs
35 and risk assessments of juveniles incarcerated at the Alexander Juvenile
36 Correctional Facility and other facilities of the Division of Youth Services



1 of the Department of Health and Human Services to identify gaps in existing
2 community-based alternative placements and services necessary to more
3 effectively and efficiently serve juveniles committed to the Division of
4 Youth Services of the Department of Health and Human Services in the least
5 restrictive settings possible consistent with public safety; and
6

7 WHEREAS, there is a pressing need to develop a juvenile justice reform
8 plan by no later than twelve (12) months from the effective date of this
9 interim study proposal that incorporates the evaluations, assessments, and
10 recommendations of the independent experts provided for by this interim study
11 proposal and other stakeholders, including the Juvenile Justice Center of the
12 University of Arkansas at Little Rock, the Department of Education, the
13 Division of Behavioral Health of the Department of Health and Human Services,
14 the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services of the Department of
15 Health and Human Services, Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, the
16 Arkansas Disability Rights Center, the Juvenile Ombudsman Division of the
17 Public Defender Commission, the Division of Children and Family Services of
18 the Department of Health and Human Services, the Administrative Offices of
19 the Courts, and families and youth; and
20

21 WHEREAS, there exists an urgent need for construction, renovation,
22 acquisition, purchase of equipment, maintenance, and other operating expenses
23 to implement the reform plan provided for in this interim study proposal and
24 to replace the facilities where conditions of confinement support ceasing
25 operation with facilities that meet contemporary juvenile justice national
26 best practices. These treatment services, programs, and centers shall
27 incorporate best practices for the provision of rehabilitative and other
28 services for juveniles and be consistent with applicable standards of
29 accreditation from the American Correctional Association,
30

31 NOW THEREFORE,

32 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
33 STATE OF ARKANSAS:
34

35 THAT the Senate requests that the Senate Interim Committee on Children
36 and Youth and the House Interim Committee on Aging, Children and Youth,

1 Legislative and Military Affairs study ways to improve the state's juvenile
2 justice system for youth committed to the Division of Youth Services of the
3 Department of Health and Human Services.

4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36