

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 29

WHEREAS, in Missouri, children between 17 and 18 years of age are considered adults and no longer fall under the jurisdiction of juvenile courts and children as young as 12 years of age can be certified as adults and tried in adult court rather than in juvenile court; and

WHEREAS, according to the Division of Youth Services(DYS),in Fiscal Year 2013, 919 youth were committed to DYS and of all the youth receiving DYS educational services in FY 2013, 22% were identified as having an educational disability, 43% had a history of prior mental health services; 54% had a history of prior substance abuse involvement; 12% were committed for the most serious felonies; 38% were committed for less serious offenses and 12% were committed for juvenile offenses; and

WHEREAS, although the DYS has been lauded across the country as a successful model for other states to follow, it is imperative that Missouri address the issue of treating youth in the adult criminal system and consider the benefits to the youth, the youth's family and to this state by retaining youth under the juvenile justice jurisdictions:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Missouri Senate, Ninety-seventh General Assembly, Second Regular Session, the House of Representatives concurring therein, hereby create the Juvenile Justice Task Force; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the mission of the task force shall be to fully consider and make recommendations in a report to the General Assembly on:

- (1) Raising the age of juvenile court jurisdiction to age eighteen;
- (2) Removing juveniles from adult jails pre-trial;
- (3) Revising the age of certification to adult court;
- (4) Current laws relating to the jurisdiction of the juvenile court;
- (5) Current research on best practices for handling offenses committed by youth in the

court system;

- (6) The benefits of retaining youth under the juvenile justice jurisdictions in this state;
- (7) Methods to reduce the number of youth in adult detention centers and prisons; and
- (8) The long-term fiscal impact of treating youth in the adult criminal system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall consist of the following members:

- (1) Two members of the Senate, one appointed by the President Pro Tem of the Senate and one by the Minority Leader of the Senate;
- (2) Two members of the House of Representatives, one appointed by the Speaker of the House and one by the Minority Leader of the House;
- (3) The Office of State Courts Administrator or his or her designee;
- (4) The Director of the Division of Youth Services or his or her designee;
- (5) The Director of the Children's Division or his or her designee;
- (6) The Chair of the State Juvenile Justice Advisory group;
- (7) The Director of the Office of Public Defender or his or her designee;
- (8) The Director of the Office of Prosecution Services, or his or her designee;
- (9) One representative from the advocacy community who has organized to advocate for juvenile justice policy reform on the state and federal level, appointed by the President Pro Tem of the Senate;
- (10) One representative from a state coalition in existence for more than 30 years which has been advocating for Missouri's at-risk, abused and neglected children and the people who care for them, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;
- (11) One representative from the juvenile and family courts appointed by the President Pro Tem of the Senate;
- (12) One mental health provider specializing in adolescent and mental health, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

(13) An ex-offender who was charged as an adult for an offense committed as a juvenile appointed by the President Pro Tem of the Senate;

(14) One at-large public member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the staffs of Senate Research, House Research, and the Joint Committee on Legislative Research shall provide such legal, research, clerical, technical, and bill drafting services as the Task Force may require in the performance of its duties; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force, its members, and any staff assigned to the Task Force shall receive reimbursement for their actual and necessary expenses incurred in attending meetings of the Task Force or any subcommittee thereof; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall meet within two months from adoption of this resolution and will report its recommendations and findings to the Missouri General Assembly by January 1, 2015 and shall terminate by January 1, 2015; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Missouri Senate be instructed to prepare properly inscribed copies of this resolution for the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and to the Office of the State Courts Administrator.

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