By Senator Meek

36-1774-99 See HB

A bill to be entitled
An act relating to the state correctional system; creating s. 944.6125, F.S.; providing that certain women who are confined by the Department of Corrections should be given first consideration for placement at a correctional facility located within a reasonable distance from the residence of the minor child of the confined woman; providing for a child-friendly environment; providing for the application of the act; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 944.6125, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

944.6125 Imprisoned women; location of women with children.--

(1) When at all possible, women who are confined by the Florida Department of Corrections for nonviolent offenses, and who have minor children, should be given first consideration for placement at a correctional facility that is within a reasonable distance from the minor child's place of residence.

(2) Once the mother who is being confined by the department is placed at a correctional facility near the residence of the minor child, the facility must provide a child-friendly environment in which the mother and child may continue the bonding process even in the harsh reality of a prison setting.

(3) The mandates of this section in no way require a minor child to visit an incarcerated parent. The provisions of this section are only applicable with respect to a child whose mother is incarcerated and whose family unit has made the decision to allow the child to visit the incarcerated parent. Section 2. This act shall take effect October 1, 1999. LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY Provides that when at all possible, women who are confined by the Department of Corrections for nonviolent offenses and who have minor children, should be given first consideration for placement at a correctional facility within a reasonable distance from the minor children. Provides for a child-friendly environment at the facility for the continued bonding of the minor child and the confined parent. Provides for the application of the act.