

By Senator Wilson

33-647-03

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to the safety of children;  
 3           providing a short title; providing legislative  
 4           intent; requiring certain children to be  
 5           enrolled in an early education or child care  
 6           program; providing attendance and reporting  
 7           responsibilities of the child's parent or  
 8           guardian and of the Family Safety Program  
 9           Office of the Department of Children and Family  
 10          Services; requiring law enforcement agencies to  
 11          investigate certain reports; providing an  
 12          effective date.

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

16           Section 1. Rilya Wilson Act; legislative intent;  
 17 requirements; attendance and reporting responsibilities.--

18           (1) SHORT TITLE.--This section may be cited as the  
 19 "Rilya Wilson Act."

20           (2) LEGISLATIVE INTENT.--The Legislature recognizes  
 21 that children who are clients of the Family Safety Program  
 22 Office of the Department of Children and Family Services due  
 23 to abuse, neglect, or exploitation are at increased risk of  
 24 poor school performance and other behavioral and social  
 25 problems. It is the intent of the Legislature that children  
 26 who are currently clients of the Family Safety Program Office  
 27 of the Department of Children and Family Services be provided  
 28 with an age-appropriate education program to help ameliorate  
 29 the negative consequences of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

30           (3) REQUIREMENTS.--A child who is between the age of 3  
 31 years old and school-entry age who is a client of the Family

1 Safety Program Office of the Department of Children and Family  
2 Services due to abuse, neglect, or exploitation must be  
3 enrolled in a licensed public or private early education or  
4 child care program and must receive age-appropriate services 5  
5 days a week. The child's parent, legal guardian, or foster  
6 parent must select the program that meets their needs and  
7 preferences in any licensed public or private early education  
8 or child care program.

9 (4) ATTENDANCE AND REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES.--

10 (a) A child who has been placed in a licensed public  
11 or private early education or child care program under this  
12 section may not be withdrawn from the program without the  
13 prior approval of the Family Safety Program Office of the  
14 Department of Children and Family Services.

15 (b) A child who is covered by this act shall attend  
16 the licensed public or private early education or child care  
17 program 5 days per week.

18 (c)1. If a child who is covered by this act is absent  
19 from the program on any day when he or she is supposed to be  
20 present, the child's parent, legal guardian, or foster parent  
21 must report the absence to the program by the end of the  
22 program day. If the parent, legal guardian, or foster parent  
23 fails to timely report the absence, the absence is considered  
24 to be unexcused. A licensed public or private early education  
25 or child care program shall report any unexcused absence of a  
26 child who is enrolled in the program and is covered by this  
27 act to the Family Safety Program Office of the Department of  
28 Children and Family Services by the end of the program day  
29 during which the child is absent.

1           2. The failure of a parent, guardian, or foster parent  
2 to report two consecutive absences shall result in appropriate  
3 intervention by the Family Safety Program Office.

4           3. Five consecutive unexcused absences constitute an  
5 unapproved withdrawal that the Family Safety Program Office of  
6 the Department of Children and Family Services must report to  
7 the appropriate law enforcement agency, which shall  
8 investigate the matter as a missing person report.

9           Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a  
10 law.

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13                                   SENATE SUMMARY

14           Creates the "Rilya Wilson Act." Requires that children  
15 who are between the ages of 3 years and school age and  
16 who are clients of the Family Safety Program Office due  
to abuse, neglect, or exploitation be enrolled in an  
17 early education or child care program 5 days a week.  
Requires the child's parent, guardian, or foster parent  
18 to report any absence to the education or child care  
program, and requires that program to report the absence  
19 to the Family Safety Program Office, on the day the  
absence occurs. Provides for intervention by the office  
20 after two consecutive absences. Provides for  
investigation by a law enforcement agency after five  
consecutive absences.