

By Senator Wilson

33-23A-06

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to female inmates who are
3 parents of minor children; providing
4 legislative findings and intent with respect to
5 the importance of a female inmate maintaining a
6 relationship with her minor child; requiring
7 the Department of Corrections to collect
8 certain information concerning the children of
9 female inmates in the state correctional
10 system; requiring the department to analyze the
11 institutional assignment of each female inmate
12 who is a parent and determine the inmate's
13 proximity to her minor child; providing an
14 exception if the court has restricted a female
15 inmate's contact with her child; amending s.
16 944.17, F.S.; requiring the department to
17 consider a female inmate's proximity to her
18 minor child when transferring the inmate;
19 amending s. 944.24, F.S.; requiring that a
20 female inmate be assigned to a facility in as
21 close proximity as possible to her minor child;
22 providing an exception if the court has
23 restricted the inmate's contact with the child;
24 amending s. 944.8031, F.S.; revising
25 legislative findings with respect to the need
26 for a female inmate to maintain relationships
27 with her minor children; providing an effective
28 date.

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30 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
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1 Section 1. Female inmates who are parents of minor
2 children; legislative findings and intent; institutional
3 assignments; data collection.--

4 (1) The Legislature finds that it is important that
5 each female inmate in the state correctional system maintain
6 contact with her minor children through visitation in order to
7 prepare the inmate to be reunited with her family upon
8 release. Although the Department of Corrections may limit the
9 activities of an inmate, the inmate may fulfill parental
10 responsibilities through visits and telephone and mail
11 communication with her family. The Legislature also finds that
12 the support provided by an inmate's family can be an important
13 resource in combating crime and reducing recidivism.

14 (2) It is the intent of the Legislature that each
15 female inmate be assigned, whenever possible, to a
16 correctional facility that is located within close proximity
17 to where the inmate's children reside.

18 (3)(a) The Department of Corrections shall collect
19 information concerning the minor children of female inmates
20 committed to the state correctional system. At a minimum, the
21 information must include:

- 22 1. The number of minor children of each inmate.
- 23 2. The date of birth of each minor child.
- 24 3. The residential address for each minor child.
- 25 4. The custodial status of each minor child.

26 (b) The department shall annually analyze the
27 institutional assignments of female inmates to determine
28 whether each female inmate who is the parent of a minor child
29 is being housed in an institution that is located within as
30 close proximity as possible to where the minor child resides.
31 The analysis must include mapping and distance calculations.

1 (4) The department need not reassign a female inmate
2 to an institution located in close proximity to where the
3 inmate's minor child resides if the court has restricted the
4 inmate's contact with her minor child.

5 Section 2. Subsection (7) of section 944.17, Florida
6 Statutes, is amended to read:

7 944.17 Commitments and classification; transfers.--

8 (7) Pursuant to such regulations as it may provide,
9 the department may transfer prisoners from one institution to
10 another institution in the correctional system and classify
11 and reclassify prisoners as circumstances may require. In
12 transferring a female prisoner from one institution to
13 another, the department shall consider, in addition to
14 security and medical considerations, whether the prisoner
15 would benefit from being housed in close proximity to her
16 minor children.

17 Section 3. Subsection (7) is added to section 944.24,
18 Florida Statutes, to read:

19 944.24 Administration of correctional institutions for
20 women.--

21 (7) Each female inmate who has a minor child shall,
22 whenever possible, be assigned to a correctional facility that
23 is within close proximity to the child. This subsection does
24 not apply if the court has restricted the inmate's contact
25 with her child.

26 Section 4. Subsection (1) of section 944.8031, Florida
27 Statutes, is amended to read:

28 944.8031 Inmate's family visitation; legislative
29 intent; minimum services provided to visitors; budget
30 requests.--

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