## Florida Senate - 2007

By Senator Wilson

33-26-07

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 as near
21	as possible to her minor child; providing an
22	exception if the court has restricted the
23	inmate's contact with the child; amending s.
24	944.8031, F.S.; revising legislative findings
25	with respect to the benefit of fostering
26	relationships between a female inmate and her
27	minor children; providing an effective date.
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29	Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
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**CODING:** Words stricken are deletions; words <u>underlined</u> are additions.

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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 in close proximity to
17	the residence of the inmate's children.
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 in close
30	proximity to the residence of the minor child. The analysis
31	must include mapping and distance calculations.

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1 (4) The department need not reassign a female inmate to an institution located in close proximity to the residence 2 3 of the inmate's minor child if the court has restricted the 4 inmate's contact with her minor child. 5 Section 2. Subsection (7) of section 944.17, Florida б 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 and reclassify prisoners as circumstances may require. In 11 12 transferring a female prisoner from one institution to 13 another, the department shall consider, in addition to security and medical considerations, whether the prisoner 14 would benefit from being housed in close proximity to her 15 <u>minor ch</u>ild. 16 17 Section 3. Subsection (7) is added to section 944.24, 18 Florida Statutes, to read: 944.24 Administration of correctional institutions for 19 20 women.--21 (7) Each female inmate who has a minor child shall, whenever possible, be assigned to a correctional facility that 22 23 is in close proximity to the child. This subsection does not apply if the court has restricted the inmate's contact with 2.4 her child. 25 Section 4. Subsection (1) of section 944.8031, Florida 26 Statutes, is amended to read: 27 2.8 944.8031 Inmate's family visitation; legislative 29 intent; minimum services provided to visitors; budget 30 requests. --31

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1 (1)The Legislature finds that maintaining an inmate's 2 family and community relationships, and fostering the 3 relationship between a female inmate and her minor child, 4 through enhancing visitor services and programs and increasing 5 the frequency and quality of the visits is an underused 6 underutilized correctional resource that can improve an 7 inmate's behavior in the correctional facility and, upon an 8 inmate's release from a correctional facility, will help to reduce recidivism. 9 10 Section 5. This act shall take effect October 1, 2007. 11 \*\*\*\*\*\* 12 13 SENATE SUMMARY 14 Requires the Department of Corrections to collect certain information regarding the children of female inmates in 15 the state correctional system and to determine whether such inmates are in institutions as near to their children as possible. Requires the department to consider 16 a female inmate's proximity to her minor child when transferring the inmate. Requires that female inmates be assigned to correctional facilities near their minor 17 18 children and provides exceptions. Provides legislative findings and intent. 19 20 21 22 23 2.4 25 26 27 28 29 30 31