

HOUSE BILL 1960

By Camper

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4;
Title 8 and Title 37, relative to juvenile justice.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Juvenile Justice
Realignment Act."

SECTION 2.

(a) There is hereby created a task force to study the feasibility and make
recommendations in preparation for the creation of a department of juvenile justice, the
mission of which will be the treatment and rehabilitation of the state's juveniles.

(b) The members of the task force shall be as follows:

(1) The following members shall be appointed by the speaker of the
senate:

(A) Five (5) members of the public, who have experience or
interest in children's issues, including, but not limited to, teachers,
counselors, community leaders, doctors, nonprofit organizers, and
attorneys; and

(B) Two (2) members of the senate;

(2) The following members shall be appointed by the speaker of the
house of representatives:

(A) Five (5) members of the public, who have experience or
interest in children's issues, including, but not limited to, teachers,
counselors, community leaders, doctors, nonprofit organizers, and
attorneys; and

- (B) Two (2) members of the house of representatives; and
- (3) The following members who shall serve as ex officio members:

- (A) The commissioner of children's services, or the commissioner's designee;

- (B) The commissioner of finance and administration, or the commissioner's designee;

- (C) The commissioner of mental health and substance abuse services, or the commissioner's designee;

- (D) The administrative director of the administrative office of the courts, or the director's designee; and

- (E) The comptroller, or the comptroller's designee.

(c) The longest serving legislative member of the task force shall call the first meeting of the task force, at which time the task force shall elect a chair. All members of the task force shall serve as such without compensation, but they shall be allotted necessary traveling and other appropriate expenses while engaged in the work of or for the task force. The task force shall be administratively attached to the comptroller's office.

(d) The task force shall study the creation of a department of juvenile justice with regard to the following goals:

- (1) The protection of the public by reclaiming juveniles through prevention, community programs, education, and rehabilitative services in the least restrictive environment possible;

- (2) The provision of custodial care and rehabilitation for the state's children who are incarcerated, on probation or parole, or in community placement for a criminal offense, status offense, or juvenile act;

- (3) The prevention of future juvenile crime and delinquency;

(4) The need for balancing accountability and public safety, while also preserving the rights of youth;

(5) The perception in many communities of a school-to-prison pipeline;
and

(6) The prevalence of mental health issues among youth who are in the custody of the state.

(e) On or before January 15, 2017, the task force shall provide their recommendation and report for the creation of the new department of juvenile justice to the speakers of the senate and the house of representatives and the governor. Upon providing such report and recommendation, the task force shall cease to exist.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring
it.