

1994 SESSION

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 268

Offered January 25, 1994

Requesting the Department of Youth and Family Services to assess the feasibility of establishing a sexual offender database.

Patrons—Baker, Darner, DeBoer, Deeds, Giesen, Jackson, Jones, J.C. and Puller; Senators: Houck and Howell

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

WHEREAS, juvenile sex offending is often a precursor of sexual offending behavior as an adult; and
WHEREAS, the number of adjudicated juvenile sex offenders is estimated to increase by 13 percent annually; and

WHEREAS, currently there is no clear empirical basis for assessing which sex offender is at greatest risk of reoffending; and

WHEREAS, despite the lack of consensus in the clinical field regarding effective techniques with sex offenders, there is agreement that intervention is more likely to be effective when provided to adolescents; and

WHEREAS, the local court service unit is often unaware of a juvenile's experience in another judicial district, specifically with respect to adjudications for sexual offenses; and

WHEREAS, a complete history of sexual offending behavior must be made available in order for the court to make effective assessments and dispositions; and

WHEREAS, few local court service units have automated client data bases and none has the capacity to electronically communicate with another; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Youth and Family Services lacks the financial resources to install a data system in the courts which would allow for the exchange of client-specific information; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Department of Youth and Family Services assess the feasibility of establishing a centralized data base, with information available to the judge and other court staff upon request, which provides an offender and treatment history for juvenile adjudicated delinquent for sexual offenses. The Department shall also be charged with developing procedural safeguards to ensure the data will be accessed for the purposes of developing an assessments and treatment plan only.

The Department shall report its findings to the 1995 Session of the General Assembly by December 15, 1994, as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

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