961510843

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 141
Offered January 22, 1996
Directing the Department of Youth and Family Services to study the laws affecting children in need of services, children in need of supervision, and status offenders.
_____

Patrons—Albo, Bryant, Drake, Dudley, Kilgore and Landes
_____

Referred to Committee on Rules
_____

WHEREAS, the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Law recognizes that certain nondelinquent behavior can have serious consequences if not dealt with by the courts; and

WHEREAS, legislation has been enacted to deal with such nondelinquent behavior by provisions concerning children in need of services, children in need of supervision, and status offenders; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement personnel find that an ever-increasing amount of their time is spent dealing with such children; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement officers frequently find that they must remain out of service for extended periods awaiting the juvenile's parent or guardian assuming custody of the juvenile; and

WHEREAS, the primary focus of the police officer is the enforcement of the criminal laws; and

WHEREAS, enhancing the ability of the courts to hold the juvenile and/or his or her parents accountable for nondelinquent actions may indirectly reduce juvenile crime by enabling the courts to ameliorate conditions which could lead to delinquent behavior; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Department of Youth and Family Services, with the assistance and cooperation of the Office of the Attorney General, is directed to examine all existing statutes directly related to children in need of services, children in need of supervision, and status offenders, with particular emphasis on runaways and curfew violators, and recommend revisions for both pre-dispositional and post-dispositional alternatives for the courts.

The Department of Youth and Family Services shall complete its work in time to submit its recommendations to the Governor and the 1997 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.