

1 SJR78  
2 184680-2  
3 By Senator Ward  
4 RFD: Rules  
5 First Read: 11-APR-17

1 SJR78

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4 ENROLLED, SJR78,

5 ESTABLISHING THE ALABAMA JUVENILE JUSTICE TASK  
6 FORCE.

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8 WHEREAS, in 2008, Alabama passed the Juvenile  
9 Justice Act of 2008 that resulted in a decline in the number  
10 of juveniles placed in state custody; the act also prohibited  
11 secure custody for particular offenses, strengthened the  
12 partnership with the Administrative Office of Courts and the  
13 Department of Youth Services, improved the Department of Youth  
14 Services continuum of residential placements, and expanded the  
15 grant program for local alternatives to commitment; and

16 WHEREAS, Alabama should build upon this promising  
17 foundation and create a task force to conduct an examination  
18 of the state's juvenile justice system and develop  
19 data-driven, research-based policy recommendations that  
20 protect public safety, hold juvenile offenders accountable,  
21 control costs, and improve outcomes for youth, families, and  
22 communities in Alabama; now therefore,

23 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH  
24 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the Alabama Juvenile Justice  
25 Task Force is created.

1           (a) The task force is hereby authorized and directed  
2 to study, evaluate, and analyze, a comprehensive review of the  
3 state's juvenile justice system and, using a data-drive  
4 approach, develop evidence-based policy recommendations for  
5 legislative consideration that will accomplish the following:

6           (1) Protect public safety.

7           (2) Hold juvenile offenders accountable.

8           (3) Contain costs.

9           (4) Improve outcomes for youth, families, and  
10 communities in Alabama.

11           (b) The Alabama Juvenile Justice Task Force shall be  
12 comprised of the following members:

13           (1) The Governor, or his or her designee.

14           (2) The Speaker of the House of Representatives, or  
15 his or her designee.

16           (3) The President Pro Tempore of the Senate, or his  
17 or her designee.

18           (4) The House Judiciary Committee Chair.

19           (5) A designee of the House Judiciary Committee  
20 Chair.

21           (6) The Senate Judiciary Committee Chair.

22           (7) A designee of the Senate Judiciary Committee  
23 Chair.

24           (8) The acting Chief Justice or designee.

1           (9) The Director of the Administrative Office of  
2 Courts, or his or her designee.

3           (10) Two currently presiding juvenile court judges,  
4 one representing a rural county and one representing an urban  
5 county, appointed by the co-chairs of the task force.

6           (11) The Commissioner of the Department of Youth  
7 Services, or his or her designee.

8           (12) One district attorney licensed to practice in  
9 Alabama with experience in representing children in  
10 delinquency proceedings appointed by the co-chairs of the task  
11 force.

12           (13) One public defender licensed to practice in  
13 Alabama with experience in representing children in  
14 delinquency proceedings appointed by the co-chairs of the task  
15 force.

16           (14) One law enforcement official representing a  
17 county with a local juvenile detention facility appointed by  
18 the co-chairs of the task force.

19           (15) The Executive Director of Alabama Children  
20 First, or his or her designee.

21           (16) One representative of the Association of County  
22 Commissions of Alabama.

23           (c) Each legislative member of the task force shall  
24 be entitled to his or her regular legislative compensation,  
25 per diem, and travel expenses for each day he or she attends a

1 meeting of the task force in accordance with Amendment 871 of  
2 the Constitution of Alabama of 1901. These payments shall be  
3 paid out of any funds appropriated for the use of the  
4 Legislature.

5 (d) The co-chairs of the task force shall be  
6 selected by the members of the task force during the first  
7 organizational meeting of the task force.

8 (e) All appointing authorities shall appoint their  
9 designees so that diversity of gender, race, and geographical  
10 areas are represented by the makeup of the state and the  
11 diversity and demographics of the Alabama juvenile justice  
12 population.

13 (f) The majority of the membership of the task force  
14 shall constitute a quorum and shall meet at the call of the  
15 co-chairs, or upon affirmative vote of a majority of the task  
16 force. All members must be notified in writing of all meetings  
17 at least five days before the date on which a meeting of the  
18 task force is scheduled.

19 (g) The task force shall conduct a comprehensive  
20 assessment of the Alabama juvenile justice system and develop  
21 and come to consensus on a set of findings and legislative,  
22 policy, and procedure reforms that will positively impact  
23 Alabama's system, including, but not limited to, focusing  
24 state resources on higher-level offenders, reducing recidivism  
25 by investing in evidence-based programs and practices, and

1 improving government performance and accountability. The task  
2 force shall receive technical assistance from the Pew  
3 Charitable Trusts to provide the members of the task force  
4 with research and data analysis of Alabama's juvenile justice  
5 system and relevant statutes and administrative policies.

6 (h) The task force shall direct the Department of  
7 Youth Services and the Administrative Office of Courts to  
8 provide relevant data and staff expertise to the technical  
9 assistance providers promptly upon request.

10 (i) (1) The task force shall hold its first meeting  
11 no earlier than May 20, 2017, and no later than June 30, 2017,  
12 at the call of the co-chairs.

13 (2) The task force shall meet no less than six  
14 times.

15 (j) The task force shall prepare and submit a final  
16 report that contains a detailed statement of the findings and  
17 policy recommendations of the task force to the Governor,  
18 leadership and ranking members of the Legislature, and the  
19 Chief Justice of the Alabama Supreme Court by February 15,  
20 2018. The report shall be made available to the public.

21 (k) The task force shall be dissolved upon  
22 submission of the report.

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President and Presiding Officer of the Senate

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Speaker of the House of Representatives

SJR78

Senate 13-APR-17

I hereby certify that the within Senate Joint Resolution originated in and was adopted by the Senate.

Patrick Harris,  
Secretary.

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House of Representatives  
Adopted: 18-APR-17

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By: Senator Ward