



Establishing Permanency for Children in Juvenile Delinquency Proceedings

This bill provides procedure for the juvenile court to enter an allocation of parental responsibilities (APR) order during juvenile delinquency cases when all parties to the case agree to the order. This provides faster permanency for some juveniles and ensures that they are in a stable environment to work towards self-sufficiency and becoming a productive member of society.

Background:

- When juveniles are arrested and charged with a crime, they become involved in the juvenile court through a juvenile delinquency proceeding.
- During the case, the court sometimes finds a close relative or friend to whom they can grant temporary legal custody of the juvenile. Temporary legal custody gives the designated party the ability to make legal decisions for the juvenile, including school enrollment or medical care.
- Once the case closes, the temporary legal custody order goes away and the juvenile may return home, but in some cases, the parent declines to take custody of the juvenile again.

Problem:

- Currently, a new case must be opened to maintain the temporary custody arrangement, *even when all parties agree to continuing the arrangement*. While the new case proceeds, the juvenile delinquency court will often keep the juvenile delinquency case open longer than necessary in order to continue the temporary legal custody.
- The only other alternative is for juveniles to be placed in foster care. These juveniles are often teens, and if placed in foster care, they face a high risk of never finding permanent homes. And teens who age-out of foster care face higher risk of poverty and homelessness.

Solution:

- This bill allows juvenile courts to enter APR orders during a juvenile delinquency case to grant legal custody to a relative or friend *when all parties agree*, establishing permanency for children who are most at-risk.
- If relatives are willing and able to take juveniles into their homes, the court system should not complicate the process by keeping the juvenile delinquency case open and requiring additional court proceedings.

Please SUPPORT HB17-1110

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