

Florida Department of Juvenile Justice
DJJ Informational Conference Call
Friday, February 3, 2012
Minutes

Welcome and Call to Order

Yvonne Woodard - Board and Council Coordinator

Conference call came to order at 3:30p.m. Assistant Secretary Finnie was unable to be on call as she was assisting with serving DJJ staff as a part of Youth Success Week.

Legislative Update

Ana Sanchez, DJJ Legislative Affairs Director

- This past week was Youth Success Day so we had a couple of events going on. We had really good participation in both of our events.
- Senate Bill 504 - passed unanimously out of its Civil and Criminal Justice Appropriations Committee. The Conforming Bill to the budget which puts 1.7 million dollars from detention so that they can use it for respite beds for those kids who have been charged with domestic violence misdemeanors. These kids do not score high enough to go into detention, but the parent doesn't want them in the home. Right now the practice is to put them into detention for that cooling off period. The Conforming Bill language would allow us to have this pot of money to be able to purchase respite beds around the state as the need arises. That passed out of the House Appropriations Committee this week.
- There's a Privatization of Prisons Bill. At the last minute and without our knowledge, Senator Siplin proposed an amendment that said 20% of the savings realized from privatizing prisons would go to DJJ to fund CINS/FINS program. That amendment was actually passed and was amended onto the Prison Privatization Bill in the Senate. They don't know if they'll have enough votes for it to pass, but if it does we have the potential with the amendment to receive 20% of whatever savings they realize when they privatize it. It's really early in the process of that bill. That language could be amended off the next time that bill is up on the Senate floor.
- The Education Bill deals with quality assurance and checking on new standards that have to be met by our education programs in juvenile justice facilities. That bill will be up in the Appropriations Committee this week as well as the new Zero Tolerance Bill.
- Waiting for the Senate to release their budget allocations so that each area starts to work on their budget. Hopefully that will be done this upcoming week, but as of yet we don't know.
- The House did release their budget last week. As of this week they actually passed it out of its House Appropriations. So it's just waiting for the Senate companion. Hopefully the Senate will be releasing its allocations and then the committees will be working on their budget sometime by this upcoming week.
- The chair for our appropriations in the Senate which is the Civil and Criminal Justice Appropriations Committee was led by Senator Fasano. Senator Fasano has been replaced in that committee by Senator Bogdanoff so we will be working with her now to deal with our budgetary issues. She sits on the committee that will actually draft our budget so we will start working closely with her.
- House Bill 173 has passed all of its committees. We're hoping to have it heard on the floor and passed out of the House in the next upcoming week. The Senate bill is still being referred to budget, but Ana believes because it does not have a fiscal impact the budgetary reference will be removed.

Questions/Comments

Ana Sanchez, DJJ Legislative Affairs

Question: *Regarding the Education Bill and the Zero Tolerance Bill that are up this week, will that be the final vote on those two bills?*

Response: *Ana Sanchez- No. The Zero Tolerance Bill in the Senate passed its first committee, but it still has two more to go. The Education Bill still has several committees to go through.*

Question: *You didn't refer to the 471 Ankle Monitor Bill. We had our county attorney write a letter to the bill's sponsor to suggest that even though we love the idea of ankle monitors, we didn't want it to be another county burden for the county to pay for it. Those funds could be used to fund civil citation or teen court programs instead. We wanted to put our voice up in the 14th circuit that we are against that bill only because of the funding source. Our letter to the bill's sponsor states that. If the department wants to do ankle monitors then the department should be able to pay for ankle monitors. We had questions about the outcomes since 441 passed last session. If the child violates their ankle monitor you can't put them into detention, so what are the sanctions for a child that's noncompliant? Do you have any information on that?*

Response: *Ana Sanchez- I can get back with you. Right at this moment I do not have a response for you. I know that we are tracking that bill. We do see that bill has not been moving. At this point in the game we are about half way through session and if that bill has not been heard in its first committee, I doubt it will get anywhere.*

Question: *How will the 1.7 million for respite beds be allocated?*

Response: *Ana Sanchez- Remember that these will be predisposition kids, so that money is being removed from the detention cost share funds. The way it will be used is that DJJ will contract with providers around the state to provide for these respite beds. Once the money in that pot is gone, we will revert back to the way things are being handled now which is that if a kid gets picked up for misdemeanor domestic violence and the parents do not want the kid in the home and there are no other relatives that can take the kid in, then the kid will be going back to detention once that pot of money is gone.*

Question: *Is that pot of money going to be equally distributed among the county or is it first come first served?*

Response: *Ana Sanchez- It's kind of a first come first served.*

Question: *Did you say that the cost sharing would not apply to the kids that are in respite beds that the state will be paying for?*

Response: *Ana Sanchez- No, it does apply. From the money that gets allocated for the detention they removed the 1.7 million out of that for respite beds. So, say in your county you have a kid who gets picked up for misdemeanor domestic violence and his parents don't want him home, instead of going to a detention center he would go to a respite bed. You would still pay for it because instead of going to detention he is going to that respite bed. That 1.7 million would be the same as you are paying now for a kid who goes into a detention center for predisposition.*

Comment: *We are already covering that in Bay County with CINS/FINS funds where we do not have to place kids into detention for misdemeanor domestic violence.*

Response: Ana Sanchez- *The only one that I know for youth who are being picked up for misdemeanor domestic violence and are being sent to respite beds is in Orange County. We are not aware that anyone else is doing that. This is separate from CINS/FINS. This is an alternative to detention.*

Question: *With reference to the Education Bill, we discussed this a little bit yesterday with our board. There are some questions related to how Workforce would be involved and it was brought up that there are some issues related to agreements on funding between DOE and DJJ. Could you speak to any of that?*

Response: *Right now we can't really elaborate on funding. That's a piece of this bill that hasn't been addressed yet, but I expect it will be addressed down the road as the bill continues to move.*

Question: *Do we expect that there will be a hold up because of that?*

Response: *That's very possible.*

Question: *As far as the Zero Tolerance Bill goes, with the proposed amendment to the language as far as changing the "shall" to "may", do we feel this bill will move forward during session?*

Response: Ana Sanchez- *Right now the department does not have a position on that bill. That bill is not a department bill. It's being proposed by Senator Wise. So as to whether the "shall" will help it or not we do not know. We do not have a position on that bill because we know that there are a lot of people who have issues and concerns with that bill.*

Question: *Regarding the update on the Privatization Bill, what exactly is the department pushing for?*

Response: Ana Sanchez- *We are not pushing for anything. The privatization of prisons is a DOC issue. It is not a DJJ issue. We are just monitoring the bill now because an amendment was added that says DJJ would get 20% of what is realized from the savings from privatizing prisons to fund CINS/FINS. We have no position on that bill because the primary Prison Privatization Bill deals with the Department of Corrections.*

Question: *Do you all see any long term effects of privatizing other services if this passes?*

Response: Ana Sanchez- *It's not a service that we provide. DJJ and DOC are two completely different agencies.*

Question: *If this passes what else is the state going to want to privatize?*

Response: Ana Sanchez- *Right now DJJ is about 95% privatized as it is. It's not a bill that we are following. It's not something that we are taking as our main focus because again it does not deal with DJJ.*

Question: *What are some of the concerns around the state that you are hearing regarding the Zero Tolerance Bill?*

Response: Ana Sanchez- *The Sheriffs Association has issues with it creating a safety zone for misdemeanants because originally the bill had it were no kids could be arrested for misdemeanors at a school. They were concerned that if something happens and the parents wanted to press charges, would have no recourse because of the way the statute read. The*

SRO's have issues. Right now we are just looking at the bill. We don't have a position, but we know that there are some concerns with certain associations.

Question: *What do you think the chances are of it passing?*

Response: *Ana Sanchez- Right now I do not know. I know that we're starting to move in towards the second half of session and things get ramped up. It depends on how long the committees will be meeting and how big the agendas are. It's not our bill and we are neutral on it so we are not supporting or pushing anything. We are simply monitoring it. It has as good of a chance as any to pass or fail.*

Question: *I'm just looking at the Electronic Monitoring Bill. I just want to clarify there's a portion of it that reads about if a child is on probation then electronic monitoring can be used. It's not just predisposition it can be used while the child is on probation. Is that correct?*

Question: *Ana Sanchez- Yes.*

Next conference call: Friday, February 17th @ 3:30 p.m.