

HB 539 -- Children's Access to Incarcerated Mothers

Sponsor: Hubbard

Beginning January 1, 2012, this bill requires the Department of Corrections, in cooperation with the Division of Family Services within the Department of Social Services, to establish a two-year pilot project to increase the access that children have to their incarcerated mothers. The project must cover two prisons which house women; one in an urban area and one in a rural area. The department and the division must collaborate to develop and implement the project by providing transportation for visits or other means available to increase visitation between children and incarcerated mothers. The project must focus on, but cannot be limited to, children who live 50 miles or more from the facility where the mother is located. Funding for the project must come from existing appropriations or any funds specifically appropriated for the project. At the end of the two-year pilot project, the department and division directors must submit a joint report to the Governor and the General Assembly by February 1, 2015, on the efficacy of the project on both children and incarcerated mothers as well as the project cost and make recommendations on whether to expand the project.