

HB 2624 -- JUVENILE COURT ORDERS

SPONSOR: Lant

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Children and Families by a vote of 8 to 0 .

This bill provides that any order or judgment entered by a juvenile court will take precedence over any order or judgment concerning the status or custody of a child under 21, or any orders of guardianship, as long as the juvenile court exercises continuing jurisdiction.

This bill also provides that any court that has jurisdiction over 17-year-olds who are found to be in need of care or treatment shall have the authority to enter an order placing such child into the legal and physical custody of any parent of the child, enter a child support order, establish rights of visitation for the parents of the child, and enter an order establishing the paternity of the child's biological father under the uniform parentage act. Such custody, support or visitation orders entered by the court shall remain in full force and effect after the termination of juvenile court proceedings if the court's order expressly states that the order shall be continuing. Furthermore, these take precedence over prior orders of the same subject matter and shall remain in full effect until subsequent orders of the same subject matter are entered by the court.

If the juvenile court terminates jurisdiction without entering a continuing order, legal and physical custody of the child shall be returned to the custodian or legal guardian who exercised custody prior to the juvenile court assuming jurisdiction, and any custody or visitation orders in effect at the time the juvenile court assumed jurisdiction shall be restored.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill would greatly benefit kids in foster care who are in state custody only because there is not a custody order that would continue after the jurisdiction of the juvenile court ends or there is no formal custody order. This inhibits the ultimate goal of permanency for kids in foster care.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Lant; Missouri Juvenile Justice Association; Tim Decker, Department of Social Services - Children's Division; Missouri Kids First; and Missouri Association For Social Welfare.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.