

# Alabama Juvenile Justice Reform

## *SB 324 by Sen. Phil Williams*

During the 2016 regular session, the Alabama Legislature passed SJR 91 creating the Alabama Juvenile Justice Task Force. The Task Force was charged with recommending changes in the law to ensure more equitable participation between the state, counties and municipalities in the administrative costs associated with caring for youth in Alabama's juvenile justice system.

This bill proposes the following changes to the law, as recommended by the Task Force:

- 1) Codify that the local law enforcement department with initial custody of a juvenile is to maintain responsibility for the transportation of that juvenile throughout the detention and disposition.
- 2) Create a more equitable cost-share formula among local stakeholders by making the following adjustments to the law:
  - a. Municipalities with at least 15% of the total county population pay a share equal to the county of the housing and medical costs for juveniles whose residence is established within the municipality. The residence of the juvenile is established by the address of the youth's parent or legal guardian, and the county population is determined by the most recent decennial census.
  - b. The housing and medical costs for juveniles with a residence in unincorporated areas will remain the responsibility of the County Commission. Counties will continue their obligation for all costs associated with the care of those juveniles residing in municipalities with less than 15% of the total county population, as established in current law.
  - c. For counties and municipalities subject to the 15% threshold, any local law creating revenue for juvenile housing or medical costs will be credited towards the costs of the juveniles in that municipality.
  - d. SB 324 preserves and exempts all existing local laws from this new funding formula. It also allows for the enactment of future local laws to establish alternative funding formulas that provide for local cost sharing.

***Questions? Call the Association of County Commissions at 334-263-7594***

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