

## Second Regular Session

### Sixty-second General Assembly

LLS NO. 00-0788.01 Chris Forsyth

SENATE BILL 00-171

## STATE OF COLORADO

BY SENATORS Tanner, Dennis, Hernandez, Lacy, Martinez, Musgrave, Nichol, Reeves, Rupert and Thiebaut;  
also REPRESENTATIVES Berry and Clarke.

**ENGROSSED**

### A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 CONCERNING CERTAIN ABANDONED CHILDREN.

#### Bill Summary

*(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not necessarily reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted.)*

Creates an affirmative defense to the criminal charge of child abuse. Allows a defendant accused of permitting a child to be unreasonably placed in a situation that poses a threat of injury to the child's life or health to affirmatively defend himself or herself if:

- The defendant voluntarily delivered the child to a firefighter or hospital staff member; and
- The child was 30 days old or younger at the time of abandonment.

Places a duty upon firefighters and hospital staff members to take temporary physical custody of a child, 30 days old or younger, who is voluntarily delivered to them by a person who does not express an intent to return for the child. Mandates that if a firefighter or hospital staff member takes temporary physical custody of such child that the firefighter or hospital staff member:

- Perform any act necessary, in accordance with generally accepted standards of professional practice, to protect, preserve, or aid the physical health or safety of the child during the temporary physical custody; and
- Notify a law enforcement officer about the abandonment within 24 hours after the abandonment.

Absolves a firefighter or hospital staff member of any civil or criminal liability for any good faith actions or omissions performed to protect, preserve, or aid the physical health or safety of the child during the temporary physical custody. Requires a law enforcement officer to take such an abandoned child into temporary custody upon receipt of

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.

*Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.*

*Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.*

SENATE  
Amended 2nd Reading  
February 17, 2000

notice.

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1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2           **SECTION 1.** 18-6-401, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended  
3 BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SUBSECTION to read:

4           **18-6-401. Child abuse.** (9) IF A PERSON IS CHARGED WITH  
5 PERMITTING A CHILD TO BE UNREASONABLY PLACED IN A SITUATION THAT  
6 POSES A THREAT OF INJURY TO THE CHILD'S LIFE OR HEALTH, PURSUANT TO  
7 PARAGRAPH (a) OF SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION, FOR SUCH AN ACT,  
8 AND THE CHILD WAS THIRTY DAYS OLD OR YOUNGER AT THE TIME OF THE  
9 ALLEGED OFFENSE, IT SHALL BE AN AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE TO SUCH  
10 CHARGE THAT THE PERSON SAFELY, REASONABLY, AND KNOWINGLY  
11 HANDED THE CHILD OVER TO A FIREFIGHTER, AS DEFINED IN SECTION  
12 18-3-201 (1), OR TO A HOSPITAL STAFF MEMBER WHO ENGAGES IN THE  
13 ADMISSION, CARE, OR TREATMENT OF PATIENTS.

14           **SECTION 2.** Part 3 of article 3 of title 19, Colorado Revised  
15 Statutes, is amended BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION to  
16 read:

17           **19-3-304.5. Emergency possession of certain abandoned**  
18 **children.** (1) IF A PERSON VOLUNTARILY DELIVERS A CHILD TO A  
19 FIREFIGHTER, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 18-3-201 (1), C.R.S., OR A HOSPITAL  
20 STAFF MEMBER WHO ENGAGES IN THE ADMISSION, CARE, OR TREATMENT  
21 OF PATIENTS, THE FIREFIGHTER OR HOSPITAL STAFF MEMBER SHALL,  
22 WITHOUT A COURT ORDER, TAKE TEMPORARY PHYSICAL CUSTODY OF THE  
23 CHILD IF:

24           (a) THE CHILD IS FORTY-FIVE DAYS OLD OR YOUNGER; AND

1 (b) THE PERSON DID NOT EXPRESS AN INTENT TO RETURN FOR THE  
2 CHILD.

3 (2) IF A FIREFIGHTER OR HOSPITAL STAFF MEMBER TAKES  
4 TEMPORARY PHYSICAL CUSTODY OF A CHILD PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (1)  
5 OF THIS SECTION, THE FIREFIGHTER OR HOSPITAL STAFF MEMBER SHALL:

6 (a) PERFORM ANY ACT NECESSARY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH  
7 GENERALLY ACCEPTED STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE, TO  
8 PROTECT, PRESERVE, OR AID THE PHYSICAL HEALTH OR SAFETY OF THE  
9 CHILD DURING THE TEMPORARY PHYSICAL CUSTODY; AND

10 (b) NOTIFY A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER OF THE ABANDONMENT  
11 WITHIN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS AFTER THE ABANDONMENT.

12 (3) A FIREFIGHTER OR HOSPITAL STAFF MEMBER SHALL INCUR NO  
13 CIVIL OR CRIMINAL LIABILITY FOR ANY GOOD FAITH ACTS OR OMISSIONS  
14 PERFORMED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

15 (4) UPON RECEIPT OF NOTICE PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS  
16 SECTION, A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER SHALL TAKE THE ABANDONED  
17 CHILD INTO TEMPORARY CUSTODY PURSUANT TO SECTION 19-3-401.

18 **SECTION 3. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds,  
19 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate  
20 preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.