

HB 2959 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Judiciary

Prepared By: Amie Fender-Sosa, Counsel

Meeting Dates: 3/3

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Specifies that it is the policy of this state to ensure that parenting plans involving children who are age 14 or older reflect the child's wishes. Requires that if the child is age 14 or older, a parenting plan may not be entered into or ordered without the consent of the child. Allows the court, on its own motion or the motion of a party, to receive testimony from a child witness and exclude all other persons except the attorneys for the parties. Requires testimony received in that manner be reported. Allows a child to testify in person or by electronic means.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

After parents have separated or dissolved their marriage, they may devise their own parenting plan that defines each parent's parenting time and responsibilities. When parents are unable to devise a parenting plan, or when either parent so requests, the court must develop the parenting plan based on the best interest of the child and the safety of the parties.

House Bill 2959 requires that if the child is age 14 or older, a parenting plan may not be entered into or ordered without the consent of the child.