

SB 386 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Human Services

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Meeting Dates: 5/12, 5/19

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires specified law enforcement to develop comprehensive policies for notifying parents of interviews with child witnesses by January 1, 2022, and to report to the legislature by September 15, 2022. Specifies witness is not the survivor or suspect, nor related to a suspect. Sunsets January 2, 2023. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment *sine die*.

Fiscal: Has minimal fiscal impact

Revenue: No revenue impact

Senate Committee On Human Services, Mental Health and Recovery: Do pass with amendments unanimously.

Senate: Passed. Ayes, 28; Excused, 2--Frederick, Heard.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Constituent experience with law enforcement when children are part of an investigation as witnesses

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

A number of factors guide professionals who interview children with regard to best practices, particularly in cases of suspected abuse, such as: the child's safety; any other urgency or threat posed by the given circumstances; the age of the child; whether the child is a potential perpetrator, or victim, or witness; what relationship the perpetrator or perpetrators may have with the child who is a victim or witness; in what setting suspected abuse may have occurred; in what setting an interview may occur; whether the child is intellectually or developmentally disabled; cultural considerations; and what effect the presence or absence of supportive and nonsupportive persons may have on the child and on the integrity and veracity of the information the child might share.

Senate Bill 386 A requires law enforcement to develop comprehensive policies by January 1, 2022, with respect to notifying parents of interviews with child witnesses (as distinguished from child survivors or suspects) and requires a report to the legislature by September 15, 2022.