

1 HJR226  
2 169116-1  
3 By Representatives Rowe, Harper, Weaver, Hill (M), Pettus,  
4 Wood, Patterson, Hill (J), Ball, Farley, Fridy and Faulkner  
5 RFD: Rules  
6 First Read: 12-MAY-15

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8 CREATING THE COMMISSION ON TRUANT, AT-RISK,  
9 DELINQUENT YOUTH.  
10

11 WHEREAS, the multiple problems of truant, at-risk,  
12 and delinquent youth are a growing concern of educators,  
13 service providers, and citizens of the state; and

14 WHEREAS, truancy is a major indicator of a youth's  
15 withdrawal from school and can lead to more serious problems  
16 for these youths and their communities, including juvenile  
17 court referrals and long-term involvement in the justice  
18 system; and

19 WHEREAS, keeping a child in school reduces the  
20 likelihood that the child will end up in the juvenile justice  
21 system where there is a high risk of recidivism; and

22 WHEREAS, criminalization of truancy and use of  
23 formal court interventions is an ineffective method of  
24 ensuring students will return to school and often acts to  
25 further alienate students from school; and

26 WHEREAS, local communities need to significantly  
27 increase their ability to effectively supervise and educate

1       this truant, at-risk, and delinquent population and to assist  
2       these youth in developing appropriate behavior in order to  
3       avoid becoming part of the criminal justice system and to  
4       achieve academic and career success; and

5               WHEREAS, research supports the concept that  
6       intervention and prevention programs, including mental health  
7       and substance abuse treatment, have long-term benefits and are  
8       more cost-effective than detention, incarceration, or social  
9       dependence; and

10              WHEREAS, cooperation and coordination among agencies  
11       and community-based organizations that have jurisdiction over,  
12       or provide services to, truant, at-risk, and delinquent youth  
13       provide the best chance for ensuring the educational and  
14       career success of that population; and

15              WHEREAS, a detailed study of systems that impact  
16       that population can provide complete information to guide the  
17       development and implementation of programs beneficial to such  
18       youth; now therefore,

19              BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH  
20       HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That there is hereby created the  
21       Commission on Truant, At-risk, Delinquent Youth to study  
22       methods to keep children out of the juvenile justice system by  
23       improving related laws, regulations, and procedures. The  
24       commission shall be comprised of the following members:

25              (1) The Chairs of the House and Senate Judiciary  
26       Committees, or their designees.

1           (2) One member of the House of Representatives to be  
2 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

3           (3) One member of the Senate to be appointed by the  
4 President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

5           (4) One member to be appointed by the Governor.

6           (5) One school resource officer appointed by the  
7 Alabama Association of Police Chiefs.

8           (6) One representative of the Juvenile Probation  
9 Officers Association to be selected by the association.

10          (7) The Executive Director of the Department of  
11 Youth Services (DYS), or his or her designee.

12          (8) One juvenile judge to be selected by the  
13 Juvenile Judges Association.

14          (9) The Commissioner of the Alabama Department of  
15 Human Resources, or his or her designee.

16          (10) The Commissioner of the Alabama Department of  
17 Mental Health, or his or her designee.

18          (11) The State Superintendent of Education, or his  
19 or her designee.

20          (12) Two superintendents of K-12 public schools, one  
21 representing a city system and one representing a county  
22 system, selected by the School Superintendents of Alabama.

23          (13) The President of the State Bar Association, or  
24 his or her designee.

25          (14) The Executive Director of the Alabama District  
26 Attorney's Association, or his or her designee.

1           (15) Two experts in the fields of truancy, at-risk  
2 youth, or alternative education, one appointed by each Chair  
3 of the House and Senate Judiciary Committees.

4           (16) One representative from VOICES for Alabama's  
5 Children.

6           (17) One representative from Alabama Appleseed.

7           (18) One representative from Alabama Children's  
8 First.

9           (19) The Executive Director of the Alabama Network  
10 of Family Resource Centers, or his or her designee.

11           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Governor shall  
12 appoint the chair once all appointments have been made to the  
13 commission. Membership shall be inclusive and shall reflect  
14 the racial, gender, geographic, urban, rural, and economic  
15 diversity of the state, as well as the diversity and  
16 demographics of the K-12 and juvenile justice populations.

17           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the commission shall  
18 study the complicated issues and identify causes of truancy  
19 and potential legislative solutions to reduce the reliance on  
20 juvenile justice referrals of delinquent youth. The commission  
21 shall study a broad range of issues related to at-risk youth  
22 including, but not limited to: Truancy; data on reported  
23 crimes and arrests of delinquent juveniles; juvenile court  
24 procedures; behavioral health, mental health, and substance  
25 abuse treatment needs; problem-solving suggestions and  
26 policies of the courts; recidivism rates; and alternative  
27 sentencing. The commission shall consider the following:

1           (1) The social and academic needs of truant,  
2 at-risk, and delinquent youth, including, but not limited to,  
3 the collection of county-specific data on truancy and juvenile  
4 court referrals.

5           (2) The effectiveness of existing social and  
6 academic programs in this state that serve these youth  
7 populations and where additional resources are needed.

8           (3) Evidence-based practices and programs that have  
9 been successful in meeting the social and academic needs of  
10 these youth populations, including, but not limited to,  
11 Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS).

12           (4) The current level of state and local funding  
13 provided to state agencies serving these youth populations and  
14 the availability of partnership grants for community-based  
15 programs.

16           (5) The financial impact of providing social and  
17 academic services through local schools and communities for  
18 these youth populations, including, but not limited to, costs  
19 associated with current detention referrals and the  
20 implementation or expansion of recommended programs.

21           (6) Recommended strategies for serving the academic,  
22 mental health, and social needs of youth returning from the  
23 Department of Youth Services or the Department of Corrections.

24           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the commission shall  
25 issue a written report of its findings, conclusions, and  
26 recommendations for proposed legislation concerning truant,  
27 at-risk, delinquent youth to the Legislature no later than the

1 15th day of the 2016 Regular Session, whereupon it shall stand  
2 dissolved and discharged of any further duties.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That each non-legislative  
4 member of the task force may be reimbursed for expenses  
5 related to attending meetings consistent with the policies of  
6 the various appointing authorities. Upon the request of the  
7 chair, the Secretary of the Senate and Clerk of the House of  
8 Representatives shall provide necessary clerical assistance  
9 for the work of the commission. Each legislative member of the  
10 task force shall be entitled to his or her regular legislative  
11 compensation, per diem, and travel expenses for each day he or  
12 she attends a meeting of the commission in accordance with  
13 Amendment 871 of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901. These  
14 payments shall be paid out of any funds appropriated to the  
15 use of the Legislature by means of warrants drawn by the state  
16 Comptroller on the State Treasury.