

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Date 4-2-90

MINUTES OF THE Senate COMMITTEE ON Federal and State Affairs

The meeting was called to order by Senator Edward F. Reilly, Jr. at \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

11:05 a.m./~~p.m.~~ on March 26, 1990 in room 254-E of the Capitol.

All members were present ~~except~~:

Committee staff present:

- Mary Torrence, Revisor of Statutes Office
- Mary Galligan, Legislative Research
- Emalene Correll, Legislative Research
- Deanna Willard, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

- Rep. Kathryn Sughrue
- Amy Herrick, Topeka
- Robert Barnum, SRS
- Rep. Martha Jenkins

Hearing on: HB 2315 - Reintegration of child into family under code for care of children

Rep. Kathryn Sughrue gave testimony in support of the bill as an incentive to improve the home situation as well as preventing children from floating in the court system. (Attachment 1)

Written testimony was distributed from Jean Melia, Pat Anders, and Ethel Peterson, all of Dodge City, urging support for the bill. (Attachments 2, 3, & 4)

Amy Herrick, Topeka, spoke in support of the bill. She talked of children caught up in the system whose parents don't want to establish a home for them. She said foster care provides food and clothing, but not a future. She talked of parents who won't sign over children for adoption but who expect the state to care for them. She talked of how often children are moved from foster home to foster home and of the problems that creates in a child. She said this bill will enable a family to be reunited if it is in the best interest of the child.

Robert Barnum, Commissioner of Youth Services, SRS, urged support for the bill which he said will send a message to parents about conditions that need to be rectified if they don't want to risk having their rights terminated. (Attachment 5)

A motion was made by Senator Bond and seconded by Senator McClure to recommend the bill favorably. The motion carried.

Action on: SB 609 - Bingo parlors; operation 4 days a week but no consecutive Saturday and Sunday

Senator Yost made a motion to adopt the subcommittee report, which will allow the daily prize value to be raised to \$1,500, will allow operation four days in a calendar week, and would delete on P. 3, Line 22 the 44 hour requirement. The motion carried.

Hearing on: HB 2284 - Requirement that inmates complete high school before parole

Rep. Martha Jenkins gave testimony urging favorable consideration of the bill. (Attachment 6)

She also distributed a letter from Frank Henderson, Jr., Kansas Parole Board, indicating support for the bill. (Attachment 7)

Unless specifically noted, the individual remarks recorded herein have not been transcribed verbatim. Individual remarks as reported herein have not been submitted to the individuals appearing before the committee for editing or corrections.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate COMMITTEE ON Federal and State Affairs,  
room 254-E, Statehouse, at 11:05 a.m./~~p.m.~~ on March 26, 1990

Staff said that other than the new language on P. 1, the rest of the bill is existing law except P. 5, Lines 1 - 4, which require the parole board to require as condition of parole that progress be made towards equivalent of a secondary education.

The minutes of the March 21, 22, and 23 meetings were approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

SENATE FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

VISITORS

Date: March 26, 1990

Name	Address	Organization	Wish to testify?	Bill No.	Proponent or Opponent
Susan Wagler	Wichita			600	Proponent
Tim Carpenter	Lawrence	Journal-World	—	—	—
KEITH R LANDIS	TOPEKA	CHRISTIAN SCIENCE COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION FOR KANSAS	No	2315	—
Sara E. White	El Dorado KS	self	yes	2315	opponent
M Hoover	Topeka	Capital-Journal			

SENATE FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

VISITORS

Date: March 26, 1990

Name	Address	Organization	Wish to testify?	Bill No.	Proponent or Opponent
<del>By Rose <del>arrived</del></del>	1419 Indiana	Self	y	HB 2315	proponent
Present in State House	Topeka	KRLDA			
ROB BARNUM	TOPEKA	Youth for SLS	Yes	2315	Proponent
Lundy Bosse	Wheaton	ATHA	No		
Jami Bosse	"	"	"		
Cheryl Krontz	Dodge City	Self	NO	2315	
Beth Powers	Topeka	KS Choice Alliance			
Belva Ott	Wichita	Planned Parenthood of KS			
Karen Mahan	Topeka	KS K-12 Safety			
Karen Francis	Topeka	KAR	No		
Paul Shelby	Topeka	OJA	no		

CHRYN SUGHRUE  
 REPRESENTATIVE, 116TH DISTRICT  
 FORD COUNTY  
 1809 LA MESA DRIVE  
 DODGE CITY, KANSAS 67801



TOPEKA

HOUSE OF  
 REPRESENTATIVES

March 26, 1990

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS  
 MEMBER: FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS  
 ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
 RANKING MINORITY MEMBER: GOVERNMENTAL  
 ORGANIZATION  
 MEMBER: MIDWESTERN CONFERENCE ON  
 HEALTH-COMMISSIONER ON  
 INTERSTATE COOPERATION

Mr. Chairman & members of the Senate Federal & State Affairs Committee

H.B. 2315 concerns the code for care of children in Foster Homes. If after 18 months in a Foster Home the court determines that progress and improvement in the parents home is inadequate, the rights of parents would be terminated, thus allowing the children to be adopted.

This bill places the review burden on the courts rather than S.R.S. so it fits well into our statutes since the court reviews the child's placement every 6 months under the code.

In 1980 the Congress of the United States focused attention on the issue of permanency planning by passage of the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act. This set of laws is designed to ensure that states properly address the need to minimize the use of foster care and move instead toward the placement of children in a permanent "home" situation, if possible. The implications of this effort are far-reaching, in terms of the overall welfare of society.

A former Chief Justice who stressed permanency planning for children in need of care to quote a portion of an address he gave:

"A need coming to the court's attention involves children known under our Juvenile Code as "children in need of care".

Just as cases should not be permitted to "float" in the court system, so these children should not be permitted to "float" in the overall social service system. Yet, we encounter cases of children who are

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Att. 1

oved from foster home to foster home, year after year, or situations where the kind of active supervision which would be most beneficial to a child in need of care is not available."

Recent published reports suggest that up to 90% of killings, rapes, and other crimes against people in the United States were committed by persons who were victims of child abuse. The estimate for Kansas is from 85 to 90%. These are the children under our juvenile code described as "children in need of care." Many of these are the children for whom foster care funds are provided.

The humanitarian aspect of this problem is of paramount importance. However, wholly aside from the humanitarian aspects of the problem, lets talk money, a matter which we all understand. Also viewing the situation as a Monday morning quaterback, we can see the lack of appropriate action is penny wise and pound foolish. Why do I say this?

In Kansas the average monthly cost for a child in a Foster Care home is \$282.45 per month or approximately \$3,600 per year. The cost for group home care is \$1,320 per month or \$15,840 per year. These costs will seem cheap compared to the cost of keeping a prisoner in prison later.

Another disturbing figure is that S.R.S. records show that of the 4,445 children supervised, 1,521 are aged 13 to 16 years of age. Many of these children should have been placed in homes with adoptive parents before they reach this age.

We are always interested in what other states are doing.

The N.C.S.L. conducted a survey of child welfare issues. 37 states that responded, 27 cited statutes that include the condition of the parents as a part of their termination statutes. Five states mention the time of an out of home placement. Termination time mentioned were from reasonable, one year, to two years. States include Delaware,

Hawaii, Louisiana, Mississippi, North and South Carolina.

H.B. 2315 will help solve some of the many problems that we have with foster care today, increased number of needy youth, enough foster parents, insurance for homes, shortages of S.R.S. dollars, but more important, placement in a permanent stable loving home.

Every effort would be made to improve the home situation -

1. Parents have 60 days to submit a plan for reintegration.
2. 2 hearings would be required during the 18 months to determine progress.

This bill should be an incentive to improve the home situation. Surely parents who really care, parents who really love their children will improve their home but if after 18 months in Foster Care improvements have not been made in the parents home that their rights would be terminated thus allowing the children to be adopted.

It seems to me shifting the emphasis of state action to prevention that is routing the child in need of care on the path of citizenship and diverting them from the road that can lead to prison is a sensible approach.

Twenty-two House members are co-sponsors of H.B. 2315. The bill passed in the house by a vote of 123 yes to 1 no.

I thank you for the opportunity to present H.B. 2315 and I urge your support.

January 22, 1990

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee:

I am Jean Ann Melia, a foster parent from Dodge City. My husband and I have lived in Kansas all our lives. We farm and have a cattle feeding operation. We have been foster parents for 7 years to 6 different children ranging in age from 8 months to 8 years. We have a son 19, in college, a daughter 16 and a daughter 8, who was previously a foster child. Our longest placement was four and one half years, a girl who was 18 months old when placed in our home- she was in 2 homes for 6 months previous to that. Another child was in our home two and one half years after 2 1/2 years in another home.

I support House Bill 2315 in regard to placing a time limit on natural parents to demonstrate they are willing to make the changes necessary to return the children to them.

Children need and have the right to feel secure, loved and safe, emotionally and physically. A foster child will love their natural parents regardless of how cruel or neglectful they have been to them. It is difficult for a foster parent to hear the child fantasize ( or what I see as fantasy) about how perfect and lovely it will be to go back home. "Mom will stop getting drunk, will stop doing drugs, will get a job, we'll get a nice house, Daddy and my little brother will come back" Reality is knowing it probably won't ever happen. Reality is the same child, when Mom gets kicked out of the halfway house after being caught with drugs, saying in hurt and anger "I knew she wouldn't change, she doesn't want to change, she doesn't care!"

Two years is an understandable time concept to an adult. To a child, two years is forever, maybe longer than they can even remember. Children in foster care are having their physical needs met but emotionally, they are in limbo; a child old enough to remember his parents knows a foster home isn't his real home. Permanency planning is not long term foster care; foster

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Att. 2



homes are also not permanent homes. The child is either saying to his foster parents or to himself "What's going to happen to me? How long will I be here? Will I ever get to go home? Does Mom/Dad love me? Do they even want me back?" And unfortunately many children do not live in just one foster home. Our first placement case involved 6 children and 20 different homes in 3 years. Many children spend many years of their childhood in SRS custody. In fiscal year 1988, 59% of the children in SRS custody had been out of their natural home longer than one year.

I realize that a family cannot make changes overnight but they can demonstrate they are seriously trying to make significant changes. This bill is not directed toward those who are really trying. However, for those parents who cannot or will not "change their circumstances, conduct, or conditions to meet the needs of the child". (Se.38-1583-b,7,8); give the court the authority within a time frame, to terminate parental rights and place the child in a permanent family setting where he can be nurtured and loved.

I realize it is a terrible decision to terminate a parent's rights to their children and it is not a decision that is made lightly. We have been involved in severence proceedings and it is a drastic solution to a drastic situation. Various agencies had worked with that family since 1974, the children were placed in foster homes August, 1982 and the entire process was not completed until 3 of the 6 children were adopted in 1987 and 1988. Two of the other children are still in SRS custody because of severe emotional problems, the other one is 18 and no longer in custody.

Foster children are not chess pawns, they are real live people with feelings, who can be permanently damaged with long term insecurity. Please seriously consider the changes in HB 2315 and give the courts the authority to say "this will not continue indefinitely". Give them this additional tool for permanency planning in a child's life, who has already received less than a winning hand from the adults in his life.

My name is Pat Anders. I have been a foster parent for about 5 years. I am now employed by Head Start in Dodge City as a Community Aid.

As a foster parent it didn't take me long to realize the importance of a time limit being put on parents of foster children to improve their parenting skills. Or in other words GET THEIR ACT TOGETHER.

If after a set length of time, the parents have not improved their home life or improved on the problem that was there when the child was removed from the home then their rights should be severed so the child has a chance for adoption. A chance to live in a stable and healthy environment.

Why do we give parents more rights than children?

To me long term foster care leaves the children in a place called limbo. They have no emotional ties to anyone. They are usually moved from foster family to foster family. They dangle in mid air waiting for a permanent place in someone's heart and home. Even knowing their foster families love and care for them-----they are still only foster children.

I wish I could show you how confused and mixed up they get. They soon learn to distrust everyone and learn never to show their true emotions. They learn what it takes to keep a foster family happy so they won't get moved and what it takes to make them unhappy so they will get moved. They learn manipulation at an early age. The SRS is manipulated by them too.

We really should have some of these children here to tell you exactly what it feels like not to have a permanent home.

Please don't neglect these children any longer. These same children that we so readily stand by and watch while they are abused and neglected are our future. Which is worse the parents abuse and neglect or the courts who remove them from a bad environment and put them on a shelf and forget them? House Bill 2315 is a step closer to permanency for these children. A parent who truly wishes to improve can do so quickly if they know their time is limited.

Thank You

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Att. 3

My name is Ethel Peterson. I am presently serving as Director of Guidance for USD 443 in Dodge City and I am a practicing elementary counselor in that system. This is my 14th year of counseling and those years followed many years of teaching. I have spent my entire career working with children, so I believe I know something about them.

First, I know that, for many, being a child is not easy--- it is not the time of joy that some of us recall fondly from our own childhood. For some children, it is a time of terror, frustration, and despair. It is for them that the concept of foster care was devised. Having been physically, sexually, or emotionally abused, they need a refuge, a haven, a safe port in the storm of life---in other words, foster care. But all of us treasure also the bond between parent and child and we are very reluctant to take one's child away. Therefore, we often return children from foster care to a home and parent that have not changed; then we bounce them back later to foster care. Or we leave them in foster care while a parent vacillates between treatment centers, between new mates, or between times spent with various law enforcement agencies. Sometimes this stretches into years. By the time we finally decide the parent won't make it, the child has reached puberty or beyond. Then, like it or not, we must admit we have failed the child.

I believe it is time we set limits for improvement or change on the part of the parent or caretaker, and if that change does not occur, parental rights can be severed. At that point, the child would be eligible for adoption into a permanent home where love and stability could become a regular basis of that child's life. I think the bill you are considering, House Bill 2315, is a step closer to that goal. It does not take us all the way there, but it does move us in that direction...and I believe we should move slowly and in carefully measured steps.

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(more)

Some statistics from the Kansas Child Abuse Prevention Council might aid in your deliberations: In Kansas in 1988 there were abuse/neglect reports involving 23,181 children. Of this total, there were 2,586 children who were confirmed as abused and or neglected, and 7,483 children were eligible for services. Think of those numbers, then consider two other statistics: (1) In the five years previous to 1988, reports increased from 30 to 41 per 1000 children; and (2) The cost to the state of Kansas to institutionalize a child in a State Hospital for one year is \$37,000. Foster care costs MUCH less and an adoption placement is even less than that. With rising numbers and rising costs, we must consider positive, pro-active steps to help the children in the most economic manner available. I believe that House Bill 2315 provides one such step.

If you could travel with me in my daily work, I have no doubt that you would pass this bill out of committee and aid in its passage in the full House. The events you would witness would persuade you that children need protection. Today's kids must be ready to run our communities of tomorrow as you and I grow old and hand the reins to them. Will they be properly prepared or will they be prison graduates, addicts, prostitutes and alcoholics? Much of this depends on the quality of their childhood. There is so much you can do to help provide the stability they need. Please give HB-2315 your most thoughtful consideration. Thank you.

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Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services

Testimony before

Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee

Regarding

House Bill 2315

March 26, 1990

Robert C. Barnum  
Commissioner of Youth Services  
Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services  
(913) 296-3284

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND REHABILITATION SERVICES  
Winston Barton, Secretary

Testimony in Support of H.B. 2315

An Act concerning the code for care of children, relating to reintegration of child into family.

(Mr. Chairman), Members of the Committee, I am appearing today in support of H.B. 2315 which requires the courts to hold a hearing if it determines after 18 months from the time a reintegration plan is first submitted that progress towards reintegration is inadequate. This hearing may determine if parental rights should be terminated.

Concern has been expressed about the massive amount of time some children spend in foster care before being placed into adoption. In many of these cases it is believed that the foster care system could move more quickly to force the situation to some sort of resolution by having the statute have the court conduct a review after 18 months in regards to possible termination of parental rights.

We believe the proposed statute will assist the foster care system to respond in a more timely manner to situations where progress in getting the child back home is inadequate. This statute would send a message in the beginning that parents need to immediately begin to rectify the conditions that caused their child to be placed or risk having their parental rights terminated.

Winston Barton  
Secretary  
Department of Social &  
Rehabilitation Services  
(913) 296-3271

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STATE OF KANSAS

MARTHA JENKINS  
REPRESENTATIVE, FORTY-SECOND DISTRICT  
LEAVENWORTH COUNTY  
ROUTE 1, BOX 47  
LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS 66048-9712  
STATE CAPITOL, ROOM 426-S  
TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612  
(913) 296-7680



TOPEKA

HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS  
VICE-CHAIRMAN: JUDICIARY  
MEMBER: AGRICULTURE AND SMALL BUSINESS  
FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS  
LEGISLATIVE, JUDICIAL AND  
CONGRESSIONAL APPORTIONMENT  
NATURAL AND SCIENTIFIC AREAS  
ADVISORY BOARD

26 March 1990  
H.B. 2284  
Rep. Martha Jenkins

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

House Bill 2284 expands the written agreement entered into by the Department of Corrections and the inmates entrusted to the DOC's custody.

Under current law, defendants and the Secretary enter into an agreement specifying those educational, vocational, mental health or other programs which the Secretary determines the inmate must satisfactorily complete in order to be prepared for release on parole. This bill provides that to the extent possible, our inmates will have worked toward or successfully completed their G.E.D. prior to their parole.

This bill is grounded on a simple idea: Inmates have a better chance of getting a job and are less likely to get into trouble again if they leave prison with an education. And if inmates learn how to read, their chances of getting out of prison increase. The DOC has stated that inmates who try to improve their education increase their chances of parole.

According to the Correctional Education Association, 75% of inmates in U.S. prisons are functionally illiterate and that most of them return to the streets that way. A Justice Department study showed that people are 25 times more likely to wind up in prison if they don't have an education.

For these reasons, I would urge your favorable consideration of H.B. 2284. Thank you very much.

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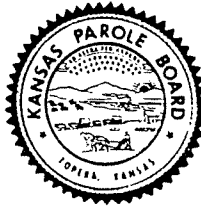
Frank S. Henderson, Jr.  
Chairman

Carla J. Stovall  
Vice-Chairman

Elwaine F. Pomeroy  
Member

George Rogers  
Member

Donald E. Mainey  
Member



**KANSAS PAROLE BOARD**  
LANDON STATE OFFICE BUILDING  
900 JACKSON STREET, 4TH FLOOR  
ROOM 452 S  
TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612-1220  
(913) 296-3469

Micah A. Ross  
Director

Sandra K. Smith  
Assistant Director

February 20, 1990

The Honorable Martha Jenkins  
Representative, Forty-Second District  
State Capitol, Room 426-S  
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Dear Representative Jenkins:

On behalf of the Kansas Parole Board, it is a pleasure to indicate the Board's support for House Bill 2284. This bill is an excellent way to indicate the importance of basic educational skills in the overall development of individuals.

This Board wholeheartedly agrees that educational skills enhance the ability of inmates to make the difficult transition from incarceration to freedom.

It is with pleasure that we support this bill.

Respectfully,

Frank S. Henderson, Jr.  
Chairman of the Board  
Kansas Parole Board

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Senate F&SA  
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Att. 7



# Prisoners can read their way to an early release in Virginia

Continued from Page A-1

key to trimming the growing number of inmates, to cutting prison costs and to rehabilitating prisoners.

The program has drawn national attention for its innovation and some say it eventually may help solve the state's most pressing prison problem — overcrowding — by helping to keep inmates from returning to prison.

"A guy's got to have a real problem to think it's better to sit in his cell and stare at the ceiling" than to learn how to read, said Imogene H. Draper, coordinator of the state's Literacy Incentive Program.

"The basic premise on which the program is based is inmates can rehabilitate more effectively if they can read," Draper said. "Society will receive a person who is capable of being more effective than when he came in."

Inmate Chester Budd put it more bluntly: "If you invest something in me I can save you \$100,000" — roughly the cost of housing a prisoner for 10 years. "If you don't you are going to lose in the long run."

Figures compiled by the Criminal Justice Institute Inc. showed that in 1988, 62.6 percent of the nation's inmates successfully completed their parole supervision. Virginia claimed a success rate of 87.2 percent, the best in the nation. Missouri reported 79.2 percent and Kansas only 57.4 percent.

Both Kansas and Missouri have been under fire in the last decade to limit prison populations. Kansas, facing a crisis, is under a federal court order to cut its prison population by July 1991. Missouri's prison problems recently have eased, though its prisons were crowded during much of the 1980s.

Missouri offers several programs to improve inmates' educations, including one overseen by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in which inmates help teachers. Last year, four more teachers were added to aid inmates about to be released, said John Bell, assistant director of classification and treatment in the Missouri Department of Corrections.

In the last six months Kansas has begun asking inmates to sign forms seeking help on specific problems, from illiteracy to substance abuse. Inmates who try to improve their education increase their chances for parole, said Bill Miskell, spokesman for the Kansas Department of Corrections.

■ Studies show that 75 percent of inmates in U.S. prisons are functionally illiterate and that most of them return to the streets that way.

To boost Virginia's program, the state's parole board adopted the policy that "literacy is an important element in judging the probability of parole success." Inmates whose parole bids are rejected are pointedly encouraged by the board to join the reading classes.

The point has been clear.

Hundreds of inmates spend 90 minutes a day, five days a week, trying to improve their reading. In exchange, they are paid a small wage, and 30 days are trimmed from their sentences for each 30 days in class. Their chances for parole also improve.

Classrooms, decorated with vocabulary words, newspaper clippings and pictures of letters, are limited to 12 inmates; daily incentives are simple.

"If they get 100 percent they get their paper on the board," said Susan Szeremet, a literacy teacher.

Graduation ceremonies are elaborate, and recently former Lt. Gov. Douglas Wilder, now governor, addressed a group that finished the reading class.

Test scores show inmates improve their skills by two grade levels for each year of participation. Community volunteers and even inmates help teachers.

"Most of them have had schooling," Draper said of her students. "It's just that schooling has never been very productive for them. This is a real chance for them that they never had."

Virginia is hardly alone in its number of illiterate prison inmates. Studies show that 75 percent of inmates in U.S. prisons are functionally illiterate and that most of them return to the streets that way, according to the Correctional Education Association.

Former Gov. Gerald Balile initially sought to make the program apply to inmates who scored below a sixth-grade literacy level. Last year, lawmakers unanimously endorsed the program by raising the

minimum literacy level to the eighth grade, which usually guarantees that persons are able to read a newspaper or fill out a job application.

Sixty-five percent of those who complete Virginia's literacy classes continue their education by entering vocational training or other education programs offered both in and out of prison.

"It does something for self-esteem," said Osa D. Coffey, superintendent of schools in Virginia's Department of Correctional Education. "Some of them really feel like the sky's the limit."

Indeed, several inmates of the Pocahontas Correctional Unit near Richmond agreed that it was self-esteem, not early release, that lured them.

"Some jobs, I didn't understand the application," said Larry Riddick, 41. "That's a bad feeling."

Riddick, a divorced father of two, said he hoped the program would help him toward a degree. "I want something on my wall to show my kids," said Riddick. "That piece of paper makes you feel good."

Though prison officials are delighted with the program, it has come under fire.

Charles Colson, a onetime aide to former President Richard Nixon and now the chairman of the Prison Fellowship Ministries in Reston, Va., said that trying to force prisoners to read before they're paroled was unconstitutional — in the same vein as trying to require voters to prove they're literate before they may cast ballots.

And Kent Willis, director of the Virginia American Civil Liberties Union, said the classes represented "an inappropriate imposition on prisoners. We don't like it."

Coffey disputed charges that the literacy program was incorrect in assuming a link between literacy and crime.

"The Justice Department did a study that showed you are 25 times more likely to wind up in prison if you don't have an education," he said.

Inmates like Leroy James, who completed the literacy program, feel bittersweet over their accomplishments.

James, 36, was out of school for 17 years before he returned to a prison classroom.

"If I had realized what I was missing from school I would have been there," he said. "That was my problem, I didn't look at education as a necessity."

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can and chairman of a committee introducing abortion legislation.

Despite the slow start, the issue began to emerge last month when Gov. Mike Hayden's abortion package was introduced. One of Hayden's bills is shaping up as the

See ABORTION, A-12, Col. 1

study into drugs in the 60s.



# Romanian babies: a legacy of AIDS

By Celestine Bohlen  
The New York Times

**BUCHAREST, Romania** — The babies, about 60 of them, are on the third floor of the drab gray hospital, the only AIDS clinic in Romania. In some rooms, there are two babies to a crib. In one small cubicle, four infants, close to death, lie in a row under a single blanket.

Of all the grim legacies of the Nicolae Ceausescu era, this may be the most chilling. According to statistics gathered by Romanian

## Disease ignored during Ceausescu era

virologists and confirmed by French doctors, Romania is threatened with an unusual pediatric epidemic of AIDS, concentrated in crowded orphanages and clinics, spread by an old-fashioned practice of giving blood transfusions to newborn infants.

Doctors here say that of 2,000 children tested so far in targeted clinics and orphanages, 250 have

AIDS and 200 others have tested positive for the HIV virus, which causes AIDS.

(The World Health Organization said Wednesday that an emergency team had been sent to Romania, where the organization's doctors said 700 children had been found to be infected with the AIDS virus.)

The plight of babies with AIDS

is not unique to Romania. But here, the authorities' willful neglect of the disease allowed it to spread quickly, compounding problems already created by poverty, poor equipment, bad medical practices, large numbers of abandoned children and other social distress common to the Ceausescu era.

On the third floor at the AIDS clinic, the Victor Babes Hospital, the nurses know that they are dealing with hopeless cases. Two

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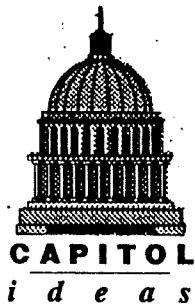
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# In Virginia prison, reading means freedom

■ **The Kansas City Times** recently examined some of the innovative laws states are enacting to address their problems. Today, in the fourth of five articles, *The Times* looks at Virginia's "no read, no release" prison program, which rewards inmates for learning how to read.



By Will Sentell  
Jefferson City Correspondent

**RICHMOND, Va.** — After years in prison, a 60-year-old inmate here recently wrote home — the first time he had tried to pen a letter to his wife.

Amid the sounds of Ping-Pong, weight-lifting and occasional banter, the man had hunched over a table in a makeshift classroom day after day, meticulously polishing his reading and writing skills.

He was not alone.

More than 4,000 inmates have tried to follow suit since 1986 when state lawmakers launched Virginia's "no read, no release" program,

which rewards prisoners for learning how to read by shaving time off their sentences and by increasing their chances for parole.

The program is grounded on a simple idea: Inmates have a better chance of getting a job and are less likely to get in trouble again if they leave prison with at least eighth-grade literacy skills.

The incentive is just as simple: If inmates learn how to read, their chances of getting out of prison increase. If they don't, their chances decrease.

Prison officials say literacy is not only the key to unlocking prison doors but may be the

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