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Senate Bills 1118, 1119, and 1120 (as introduced 2-9-20)

Sponsor: Senator Jud Gilbert, II (S.B. 1118)

Senator Gilda Z. Jacobs (S.B. 1119) Senator Tupac A. Hunter (S.B. 1120)

Committee: Families and Human Services

Date Completed: 2-22-10

#### **CONTENT**

<u>Senate Bills 1118 and 1119</u> would amend the Safe Delivery of Newborns Law to modify provisions under which the family court may terminate parental rights to a surrendered newborn. <u>Senate Bill 1120</u> would delete similar provisions in the juvenile code.

The bills are described below.

# Senate Bills 1118 and 1119

The Safe Delivery of Newborns Law (Chapter 12 of the Probate Code) allows a parent to surrender a newborn infant to an emergency service provider, which must take temporary protective custody of the child. If the surrendering parent wants custody of the newborn, he or she must file a petition with the family court within 28 days. If the parent does not do so, he or she is presumed to have knowingly released his or her parental rights to the newborn, and a child placing agency immediately must file a petition with the court to determine whether the court will enter an order terminating the rights of the surrendering parent.

If the court finds that the surrendering parent has knowingly released his or her parental rights and that reasonable efforts were made to locate the nonsurrendering parent, the court must enter an order terminating the parental rights of the surrendering parent and the nonsurrendering parent.

Under Senate Bill 1118, this requirement would apply if a custody action had not been filed.

Under the Law, if a custody action is filed, the court must determine custody of the newborn based on his or her best interest, considering each factor listed in the statute. Based on these findings, the court may issue an order that does one of the following:

- -- Grants legal and/or physical custody of the newborn to the parent, and retains or relinquishes jurisdiction.
- -- Determines that the best interests of the newborn are not served by granting custody to the petitioner parent, and terminates his or her parental rights and gives a child placing agency custody and care of the newborn.

-- Dismisses the petition.

Page 1 of 2 sb1118-1120/0910

Under Senate Bill 1119, instead of terminating the petitioner's parental rights and giving a child placing agency care and custody, the court could order a child placing agency to petition the court for jurisdiction under the juvenile code, if the court found that granting custody to the parent would not serve the newborn's best interests.

### Senate Bill 1120

The juvenile code (Chapter 12A of the Probate Code) authorizes the family court to terminate the parental rights to a child who remains in foster care or in the custody of a guardian or limited guardian, if the court makes certain findings by clear and convincing evidence. These include a finding that the child has been deserted under one of the circumstances listed in the code (including surrender under Chapter 12).

Specifically, the juvenile code allows the court to terminate parental rights to a child if his or her parent voluntarily surrendered the child to an emergency service provider under the Safe Delivery of Newborns Law and did not petition the court to regain custody within 28 days. The bill would delete this provision.

MCL 712.17 (S.B. 1118) 712.15 (S.B. 1119) 712A.19b (S.B. 1120)

# Legislative Analyst: Suzanne Lowe

# **FISCAL IMPACT**

The bills would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Fiscal Analyst: Bill Bowerman

David Fosdick

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.