

ARIZONA STATE SENATE

47TH LEGISLATURE SECOND REGULAR SESSION

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE ON FAMILY SERVICES

DATE: March 20, 2006 **TIME:** 2:30 p.m. **ROOM:** SHR2

CHAIRMAN: Senator Johnson **VICE CHAIRMAN:** Senator Verschoor

ANALYST: Kim Martineau **INTERN:** Jessica Ripplinger

COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Bill Ritz

ATTENDANCE

BILLS

<u>Committee Members</u>	<u>Pr</u>	<u>Ab</u>	<u>Ex</u>	<u>Bill Number</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
Senator L. Gray	X			HB 2413	HELD
Senator Rios	X			HB 2488	DP
Senator Soltero	X			HB 2558	DPA
Senator Verschoor, Vice Chairman	X			HB 2696	DPA
Senator Johnson, Chairman	X			HB 2773	DPA

Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 2:37 p.m., and attendance was taken.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Senator Johnson moved the minutes of March 13, 2006 be approved. Without objection, the minutes were approved as distributed.

CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

HB 2558 – adult protective services; investigations; hearings – DO PASS AMENDED

Jessica Ripplinger, Family Services Research Intern, explained HB 2558 and the 8 line Johnson amendment dated 03/17/06 at 3:40 p.m. (Attachment A).

Representative Anderson further explained HB 2558.

Senator Verschoor moved HB 2558 be returned with a DO PASS recommendation.

Senator Verschoor moved the 8 line Johnson amendment dated 03/17/06 at 3:40 p.m. The motion CARRIED by voice vote.

Patrick Shannahan, Ombudsman-Citizens' Aide, testified in support of HB 2558 and answered questions posed by the Committee members.

Senator Verschoor moved HB 2558 be returned with an AS AMENDED, DO PASS, recommendation. The motion CARRIED with a roll call vote of 5-0-0 (Attachment 1).

HB 2488 – child support enforcement; performance audit – DO PASS

Senator Johnson stated there was discussion on HB 2488 during last week's meeting and this week the Committee will move the bill and vote on it.

Senator Gray moved HB 2488 be returned with a DO PASS recommendation.

The motion CARRIED with a roll call vote of 3-2-0 (Attachment 2).

In explanation of her vote, Senator Rios stated based on the testimony that was heard last week, she believes this bill is entirely unnecessary. The Office of the Auditor General indicated they would need relief from other audits in order to complete this audit and also relayed the last audit was done in 2001 which resulted in child support enforcement implementing every recommendation that was made. Senator Rios added she would recommend that the Committee look at implementing more resources into collecting child support as opposed to re-auditing a system that was recently audited and voted "No."

In explanation of his vote, Senator Soltero stated there is an interim committee that deals with the issue of child support enforcement and he is concerned as to why the recommendations of this committee are not being considered. Senator Soltero added he is concerned with what the audit will produce that it will be different from the committee's recommendations and voted "No."

HB 2413 – developmental disabilities; conforming legislation – HELD

Kim Martineau, Family Services Research Analyst, explained the 7 page Johnson strike everything amendment dated 03/16/06 at 2:55 p.m. (Attachment B) and the 5 page Johnson amendment to the 7 page Johnson strike everything amendment dated 03/17/06 at 4:22 p.m. (Attachment C).

Senator Johnson further explained the 7 page Johnson strike everything amendment.

Representative Hershberger further explained HB 2413.

Stuart Goodman, Arizona Board of Psychologist Examiners, testified in support of HB 2413 and answered questions posed by the Committee members.

Senator Johnson announced HB 2413 will be held until next week to allow the opposing sides to come to a consensus that will work for everybody.

Paulette Selmi, Ph.D. Licensed Psychologist, representing self, testified in support of HB 2413.

Donna Cross, Licensed Counselor, representing self, testified in support of HB 2413 and answered questions posed by the Committee members.

Megan Hunter, Family Law Specialist, Arizona Supreme Court, answered questions posed by the Committee members.

Brooks Gibson, Professional Counselor, representing self, testified in support of HB 2413.

Diana Vigil, licensed professional counselor, representing self, testified in support of HB 2413.

Senator Verschoor announced the individuals who registered their position on the bill (Attachment D).

Dale Wiebusch, Director of Systems Advocacy, Arizona Coalition Against Domestic Violence, testified in opposition to HB 2413.

David McPhee, representing self, testified in support of HB 2413.

HB 2773 – appropriation; women’s services – DO PASS AMENDED

Jessica Ripplinger, Family Services Research Intern, explained HB 2773 and the 6 line Johnson amendment dated 03/17/06 at 2:26 p.m. (Attachment E). Ms. Ripplinger also answered questions posed by the Committee members.

Ron Johnson, Executive Director, Arizona Catholic Conference, testified in support of HB 2773.

Maureen Roll, Licensed Social Worker, representing self, testified as neutral to HB 2773 and answered questions posed by the Committee members.

Representative McClure, further explained HB 2773 and answered questions posed by the Committee members.

Senator Verschoor announced the individuals who registered their position on the bill (Attachment D).

Cathi Herrod, Interim President, Center for Arizona Policy, testified in support of HB 2773.

Senator Verschoor moved HB 2773 be returned with a DO PASS recommendation.

Senator Verschoor moved the 6 line Johnson amendment dated 03/17/06 at 2:26 p.m. The motion CARRIED by voice vote.

Senator Verschoor moved HB 2773 be returned with an AS AMENDED, DO PASS, recommendation. The motion CARRIED with a roll call vote of 4-1-0 (Attachment 3).

In explanation of her vote, Senator Rios stated this is a difficult bill for her because while she agrees that this money can be well spent for women that have already decided to keep their children, she thinks the State is once again not being proactive. Senator Rios added Arizona is one of twelve states that does not provide for family planning services and until the State starts looking at some preventative situations, the State will continue having to provide monies on the back end. In conclusion, Senator Rios stated this bill is a piece meal approach and unfairly focuses on one type of organization, however, one of these organizations is in her district and voted "Aye."

In explanation of his vote, Senator Soltero stated based on the testimony, he believes there are agencies that already exist that provide this type of service. Senator Soltero added he feels this bill goes to one side in the area of a pregnant woman's choice or how they want to handle their own life and he is concerned about how this bill addresses this issue and voted "No."

In explanation of her vote, Senator Johnson stated agencies that offer alternatives to abortions do help women in crisis pregnancy situations in Arizona to be informed about their options and provide them with the resources they need to choose life for their babies and voted "Aye."

HB 2696 - adoption – DO PASS AMENDED

Kim Martineau, Family Services Research Analyst, explained HB 2696 and the 20 line Johnson amendment dated 03/17/06 at 10:02 a.m. (Attachment F). Ms. Martineau also answered questions posed by the Committee members.

Marcia Reck, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 2696 and answered questions posed by the Committee members. Ms. Reck also handed out copies of a petition signed by members and friends of Faith Lutheran Church in opposition to HB 2696 (Attachment G).

Ron Johnson, Executive Director, Arizona Catholic Conference, testified in support of HB 2696 and answered questions posed by the Committee members.

Susan Frank, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 2696 and answered questions posed by the Committee members.

Beth Rosenberg, Children's Action Alliance, testified in opposition to HB 2696 and answered questions posed by the Committee members.

Peggy Cloo, representing self, testified in opposition to HB 2696 and answered questions posed by the Committee members.

Peter Gentala, Legal Counsel, Center for Arizona Policy, testified in support of HB 2696 and answered questions posed by the Committee members.

Senator Soltero stated it seems like there are two sections of the bill that are confusing and it might be a good idea to hold the bill until they are clarified.

Senator Johnson stated if the Committee speaks to Representative Tully regarding sections that are somewhat ambiguous, she is sure he would be willing to do a clarifying amendment on the Floor during the Committee of the Whole.

Senator Verschoor moved HB 2696 be returned with a DO PASS recommendation.

Senator Verschoor moved the 20 line Johnson amendment dated 03/17/06 at 10:02 a.m. The motion CARRIED by voice vote.

Senator Verschoor moved HB 2696 be returned with an AS AMENDED, DO PASS, recommendation. The motion CARRIED with a roll call vote of 3-2-0 (Attachment 4).

In explanation of her vote, Senator Gray stated the State needs to take into consideration the desires of the one giving up the child. Senator Gray added there are a number of situations in which a single parent is qualified to devote the time to a child, however, there are exceptions in the bill that allow for the best interest of the child and voted "Aye."

In explanation of her vote, Senator Rios stated HB 2696 does not keep the best interest of the children in mind and tells single parents they are second class citizens and will only accept them as a last resort for adoptive care. This bill says to children who have been abused, neglected, or need a home with one loving parent instead of two, the State knows better than therapeutic teams. This bill also completely ignores that there are 10,000 children in out home care in Arizona, 2,000 of which are ready for adoption and about 750 parents willing to adopt. The State is still lacking in the number of adoptive homes and is constantly telling CPS to recruit more foster and adoptive homes, and now we are going to put out a public policy that will cause single parents to second guess as to why they are going to subject themselves to a home study and weeks and months of paperwork if in the end there is a married couple that will end up adopting the child that they have been working with. In conclusion, Senator Rios stated her ultimate concern is the State is not looking at the best interest of the children and not taking into account that there are too many children languishing in foster care that need adoptive homes and half as many people willing to take them in and voted "No."

In explanation of his vote, Senator Soltero stated he is personally acquainted with a couple of single young women in Tucson that have adopted children. These women are good individuals, hard working, are well organized, are not the type of individuals that would not succeed in the adoption process, and are very happy. Senator Soltero added these are two examples that show the State should not say that a married couple is going to be a better parent than a single parent and the fact remains that there are many single individuals that would make excellent parents to adoptive children. In conclusion, Senator Soltero stated the State should not make it more difficult for a single person to adopt a child and they should be given the same abilities and rights as a married couple and voted "No."

In explanation of her vote, Senator Johnson stated she respectfully disagrees with Senators Soltero and Rios and believes adoption is about the best interest of the children, not the desires of adults.

Senator Johnson added statistically it has been proven children do much better in life when they have a married mother and father and voted "Aye."

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Ritz
Committee Secretary

(Tapes and attachments on file in the Secretary of the Senate's Office/Resource Center, Room 115.)