

## Unfavorable Response to HB951 School Systems – Reportable Offenses - Alterations

Families Advocating Intelligent Registries (FAIR) seeks rational, constitutional sexual offense laws and policies for persons accused and convicted of sexual offenses.

The focus of HB951 is the requirement for law enforcement to notify certain school authorities of alleged offenses committed by a juvenile attending the school. FAIR acknowledges that, in some circumstances, reporting information that may impact the safety of the school community is appropriate. However, FAIR has two significant concerns with HB951.

First, under current law (Education 7-303), notification to school officials occurs only after a juvenile's **arrest**. Under HB951, however, the report would be made based solely on **suspicion** of a reportable offense. For example, a parent hears that their 14-year old child engaged in inappropriate touching with a classmate. Unhappy about it, instead of calling the other child's parents or engaging with the child, they call the police. This bill would mandate a report to school authorities. As a result, the juvenile will be prematurely labeled and monitored as a sexual offender, even if the allegations are later deemed unfounded.

It remains unclear whether school authorities would isolate the student solely on this report. However, students should be protected from the negative consequences of isolation, embarrassment and labeling (even if limited to School Authorities) – particularly when based on mere suspicion.

Second, the proposed **expansion of reportable offenses is excessively broad**. The current list primarily includes felonies, many involving violent offenses or participation in criminal organizations. In contrast, the expanded list would encompass offenses that, if committed by an adult, would be classified as misdemeanors and are nonviolent (e.g., Crim Law 3-902; Crim Law 3-809). This broad expansion, combined with the lower threshold for reporting – from arrest to mere suspicion – creates a significant risk of long-term reputational harm, isolation and undue stigmatization of innocent juveniles. Even though the bill requires law enforcement to notify school authorities if suspicion does not result in an arrest, by that point, the reputational harm to the juvenile has already been done – harm that cannot be undone.

For these reasons, FAIR urges the committee to return an unfavorable report on HB951.

Sincerely,



Brenda V. Jones, Executive Director  
Families Advocating Intelligent Registries