

February 27, 2001

S 252. INFANT HOMICIDE PREVENTION ACT (=H 275). *TO DECRIMINALIZE ABANDONMENT OF AN INFANT UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES AND TO MODIFY SOME PROCEDURES INVOLVING ABANDONED JUVENILES.* Amends GS 7B-302 to require a county director of social services who receives a report of child abandonment to immediately initiate an investigation, to take steps to arrange for the child's custody, and to determine whether an abandoned child has been reported as a missing child. Amends GS 7B-500 to require law enforcement officers, department of social services workers, certain health care workers, and emergency medical technicians at fire stations to take temporary custody of an infant under 15 days of age that is voluntarily delivered to the individual by a parent who intends to abandon the child. Permits, but does not require, any other adult to take temporary custody of an infant under the same circumstances. Requires individuals who take such custody to perform any act necessary to protect the physical health and well-being of the infant. States that an individual who takes temporary custody of an infant under those conditions may inquire as to the parents' identities and relevant medical history, but the parent is not required to respond. Immunizes individuals who take custody under this law from civil or criminal liability, so long as the individual was acting in good faith. Amends GS 7B-1111(a)(7) to permit a court to terminate parental rights upon a finding that a parent has voluntarily abandoned an infant for at least 60 days pursuant to GS 7B-500 as amended. Adds new GS 14-322.3 to prohibit the criminal prosecution for abandonment of a parent who voluntarily delivers an infant less than 15 days old to a health care provider, a law enforcement officer, a department of social services worker, an emergency medical technician at a fire station, or another suitable adult who willingly accepts the infant. Makes additional conforming changes to the criminal code. Directs DHHS, Div'n of Public Health, to develop a media campaign to inform the public of this law. Appropriates \$150,000 for 2001-2002 and \$150,000 for 2002-2003 from General Fund to DHHS, Div'n of Public Health to implement the media campaign. Appropriation and media campaign provisions effective July 1, 2001; remainder effective December 1, 2001.

Intro. by Martin of Guilford and Carpenter.

Ref. to Judiciary II	GS 7B, 14, APPROP
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