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COMMITTEE: HOUSE FAMILIES, CHILDREN & SENIORS
CHAIR: REP. TOM HOOKER
DATE: MARCH 11, 2015

RE: HB4041 - FAMILY INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM ASSISTANCE
SCHOOL ~~ASSISTANCE~~ ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT

WHILE IT IS LIKELY A FOOLISH THING TO DO, OPPOSING LEGISLATION SPONSORED BY THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIR, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU FINALLY GET $900,000 IN PROPOSED FUNDING - BY THE GOVERNOR FOR YOUR CAUSE (PREVENTION OF PRENATAL ALCOHOL EXPOSURE AND ASSISTANCE FOR FAMILIES (MOSTLY FOSTER & ADOPTIVE)), BUT THAT NEVER STOP ME BEFORE.

THIS LEGISLATION IS 'BACKWARDS'. FAMILIES AND KIDS IN THIS SITUATION NEED MORE ASSISTANCE, NOT LESS! IT IS NOT THE 'SCHOOL TO PRISON PIPELINE', IT IS THE 'WOMB TO PRISON PIPELINE'. PRENATAL ALCOHOL EXPOSURE IS THE 'POVERTY TRAP'. KIDS CAUGHT IN THIS 'TRAP' DO NOT STAY KIDS. MOST WILL BECOME PARENTS - UNFORTUNATELY, OFTEN NOT GOOD ONES. THEY NEED MORE HELP - NOT LESS. PUNISHMENT IS NOT THE ANSWER - GETTING TO THE 'ROOT CAUSE' OF THE PROBLEM IS.

TRUANCY SHOULD BE USED AS THE 'INDICATOR' FOR MORE INVOLVEMENT BY THE STATE, MORE ASSISTANCE. PROPER PRENATAL CARE, INCLUDING MEDICAL, NUTRITION, AND ESPECIALLY - THE ELIMINATION OF PRENATAL ALCOHOL EXPOSURE - IS THE WAY TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF POVERTY - AND FOSTER 'INDEPENDENCE'.