

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE BILL NO. 403

BY JUDICIARY, RULES AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

AN ACT

RELATING TO CHILD PROTECTION; AMENDING SECTION 16-1601, IDAHO CODE, TO RE-
VISE A STATEMENT OF POLICY.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

SECTION 1. That Section 16-1601, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby
amended to read as follows:

16-1601. POLICY. The policy of the state of Idaho is hereby declared
to be the establishment of a legal framework conducive to the judicial pro-
cessing, including periodic review of child abuse, abandonment and neglect
cases, and the protection of any child whose life, health or welfare is en-
dangered. At all times, the health and safety of the child shall be the pri-
mary concern, but nothing in this chapter shall invalidate parental protec-
tions and rights recognized in sections 32-1010 through 32-1012, Idaho Code.
Each child coming within the purview of this chapter shall receive, prefer-
ably in his own home, the care, guidance and control that will promote his
welfare and the best interest of the state of Idaho, and if he is removed from
the control of one (1) or more of his parents, guardian or other custodian,
the state shall secure adequate care for him; provided, however, that the
state of Idaho shall, to the fullest extent possible, seek to preserve, pro-
tect, enhance and reunite the family relationship. Nothing in this chapter
shall be construed to allow discrimination on the basis of disability. This
chapter seeks to coordinate efforts by state and local public agencies, in
cooperation with private agencies and organizations, citizens' groups, and
concerned individuals, to:

- (1) Preserve the privacy and unity of the family whenever possible;
- (2) Take such actions as may be necessary and feasible to prevent the
abuse, neglect, abandonment or homelessness of children;
- (3) Take such actions as may be necessary to provide the child with per-
manency including concurrent planning;
- (4) Clarify for the purposes of this act the rights and responsibil-
ities of parents with joint legal or joint physical custody of children at
risk; and
- (5) Maintain sibling bonds by placing siblings in the same home when
possible, and support or facilitate sibling visitation when not, unless such
contact is not in the best interest of one (1) or more of the children.