

HOUSE BILL 3720

By Maddox

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 37
and Title 49, relative to creation of a task force to
study the statewide replication of Carroll Academy.

WHEREAS, Carroll Academy in Huntingdon, Tennessee, is an intensive day treatment program operated by the Carroll County Juvenile Court since 1994 in collaboration with the Department of Children's Services to serve the counties of Carroll, Benton, Henry, Weakley, and Henderson Counties; and

WHEREAS, Carroll Academy offers an integrated team of professionals providing compassionate, cost effective, competent care for at risk adolescents referred there by five juvenile courts for the purpose of preventing more intensive court involvement and consciously teaching/modeling functional life and academic skills necessary to assume meaningful and productive citizenship in our society; and

WHEREAS, since its inception the program has served more than 2,200 students from the local communities while holding parents accountable by an order from the local juvenile court. Carroll Academy's remarkable success can readily be seen in Carroll County alone, where the custody rate has been reduced from 40+ per year to fewer than 6+ per year for ten years out of an eleven-year period; and

WHEREAS, operated by the Carroll County Juvenile Court and licensed by the State of Tennessee, Carroll Academy is funded by the Department of Children's Services as a custody prevention agency and serves children who are ordered to their program for six months or until they complete the program's behavioral plan; and

WHEREAS, Carroll Academy's services include transportation to and from the program each day as ordered by that court for the purpose of behavior modification and intervention;

each student also receives counseling, balanced meals, appropriate educational services, family intervention, and group life skills training while a part of the program; and

WHEREAS, the success story that is Carroll Academy should be thoroughly examined to determine if replication of this program on a statewide basis could be beneficial and improve the lives of countless children and their families in Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. There is hereby created a task force to conduct a feasibility study of the statewide replication and implementation of the Carroll Academy program.

SECTION 2. The task force shall consist of three (3) members each from the senate and the house of representatives. The speaker of the senate shall appoint one (1) member of the senate judiciary committee, one (1) member of the senate general welfare, health and human resources committee, and one (1) member of the senate education committee to the task force. The speaker of the house shall appoint one (1) member from the house judiciary committee, one (1) member from the house children and family committee, and one (1) member from the house education committee to the task force.

SECTION 3. The task force shall seek input from the department of children's services, the department of education, representatives from Carroll Academy and the juvenile courts of Carroll, Benton, Henry, Weakley, and Henderson Counties, and any other parties the task force deems appropriate.

SECTION 4. The task force shall be convened by the member with the most years of continuous service in the general assembly, and at its first meeting shall elect from among its membership a chair, vice-chair, and such other officers the task force deems necessary.

SECTION 5. All appropriate state agencies shall provide assistance to the task force upon request of the chair.

SECTION 6. All legislative members of the task force who are duly elected members of the general assembly shall remain members of such task force until the task force reports its findings and recommendations to the general assembly.

SECTION 7. The task force shall timely report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the one hundred and seventh general assembly no later than February 1, 2011, at which time the task force shall cease to exist.

SECTION 8. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.