

Senate Bill No. 2335
Senate Human Service Committee
Testimony Presented by
Cathy Ferderer, Juvenile Court Coordinator
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For the record, my name is Cathy Ferderer, and I am the Juvenile Court Coordinator for the State Court Administrator's Office. I am appearing today on Senate Bill 2335 to offer testimony in opposition to a section of the bill.

SB 2335 amends Chapter 27-20.3-04 Powers and Duties of Director of Juvenile Court beginning on Section 3 lines 20-21. The amendment designates the director of the juvenile court to assess or screen each child in need of service or child in need of protection for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. The court has several concerns with this language. First, the director of the juvenile court does not provide case management services to children subject to a child in need of service or a child in need of protection referral. Those referral types are sent to the Human Service Zone who provide services.

Secondly, according to the National Institutes of Health, screenings for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders should include checks for intellectual disabilities and developmental delays, screening for specific physical features such as small head, small eyes, thin upper lip, below average weight and height, short attention span, problems with impulse control, poor coordination, vision and hearing impairment. This would require the director to meet with each of these children in person to make such observations as well as require specific training. The director of the juvenile court does not have the access to children referred to the human service zones, the specific training, or the background to complete these screenings.

I will stand for any questions.