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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Thomas L. Tyler.

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DIGEST

SB 224 Original

2020 Regular Session

Barrow

Proposed law enacts a "Foster Youth's Bill of Rights" to be implemented through the policies and practices of the Department of Children and Family Services for certain youth in foster care in the state.

Proposed law enumerates the following rights for youth in foster care who are age 14 through 18:

- (1) The right to privacy concerning the youth's personal, confidential information; and the right to attend all court hearings about the care to be received.
- (2) The right to be in a stable and supportive setting that is free from neglect and emotional, verbal, physical, and sexual abuse or exploitation, and that is the least restrictive to meet the youth's needs.
- (3) The right to participate in all case plan meetings; to include supportive adults of the youth's choice to be on the planning team; and to be provided a copy of the youth's case plan every six months or whenever changes are made to the plan.
- (4) The right to have the youth's medical and mental health needs met on a regular and timely basis; and to be provided adequate trauma-based counseling and therapeutic services throughout the youth's time in foster care.
- (5) The right to be provided the contact information of the youth's caseworker, attorney and CASA volunteer, and to attend meetings with them on a regular basis; to have access to a telephone to talk to or visit with approved friends, and relatives, including siblings, at least once a month.
- (6) The right to access materials necessary for school and to further the youth's education, including access to computer or other electronic devices and to the internet when needed to complete assignments, to receive tutoring services, and to access information regarding college admissions and testing in accommodation for any learning or developmental disability or special health need.
- (7) The right to be involved in extracurricular activities, including, school clubs, dances, field trips, sports teams and to be provided with supplies and uniforms required for team participation; to remain in the youth's school of origin; the right to attend a driver's education class; and to obtain employment and transportation to employment within the vicinity of foster care placement.

- (8) The right to refuse involvement in religious based activities; and have a right to continue the youth's cultural, religious, and ethnic traditions and belief systems; and to be free from derogatory comments regarding sexual preference, pronouns, gender identity and to be addressed by the youth's preferred pronoun.
- (9) The right to attend and have transportation to services, events, and activities provided by the Independent Living Skills Program within the youth's region, and to receive timely notification of upcoming youth advocacy and engagement services in the youth's region; and to be provided with the entire amount of the monthly allowance as outlined in policy.
- (10) The right to express and voice the youth's needs, concerns, and desires about foster care.

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 46:286.16)