

Georgia Child Support Commission Meeting

STATUTE REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA

Summary of Meeting Minutes

Friday, August 25, 2006

The meeting was called to order at @12:30pm by Subcommittee Member Judge Debra Bernes, who was filling in for Subcommittee Chair Judge Louisa Abbot. Subcommittee members in attendance were as follows: Annetta Panatera; Judge R. Michael Key; and Joy Hawkins. Child Support Commission Chair Earl Ehrhart was also in attendance. Staff, special invited guests (including Jill Travis of Legislative Counsel) and members of the public, including representatives of the Family Law Section of the Georgia State Bar were also in attendance.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Judge Bernes summarized that the revised child support bill, as submitted from the Child Support Commission to the Legislature last January, remained for the most part intact, except for three major changes made by the House. Those changes were: (1) Parenting Time went from a presumptive adjustment to a discretionary deviation; (2) Grounds for a Modification were altered; and (3) the Statute's effective date was changed from July 1, 2006 to January 1, 2007. Judge Bernes said it seemed that this legislation was being more carefully scrutinized than other pieces of legislation passed by the Legislature. To that end, she introduced Jill Radwin who has been keeping track of communications pointing out nuances and clarification issues. Jill reviewed some of these technical revision suggestions with the subcommittee. It was decided that the Statute Review Subcommittee was not going to look at what would be considered more substantive issues this year.

II. Potential Technical Revisions to Senate Bill 382

Jill pointed out some suggested technical revisions, beginning with the definition subsection. The suggested revisions were being mentioned only as preliminary thoughts and whether revisions were even needed at this point since the statute was not yet in effect. One such suggestion involved updating the name of the Child Support Services Agency. The Subcommittee browsed through some of the other subsections of the guidelines, looking at a possible needed paragraph break or vague language which may have created some confusion as to interpretation. Annetta Panatera suggested that the Commission may want to revisit the provision on special expenses and the associated seven percent threshold.

IV. Next Steps

However, after discussion of some possible technical revisions, the consensus was that the wiser course was to allow the statute to be implemented, and allow some time following its effective date to revisit whether there is a real need for any "clean up" revisions.

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned.

