

UT Parents' jailing anywhere could affect custody rights

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Utah judges would be required to consider imprisonment as a factor for terminating parental rights even if a child is not in state custody under provisions of a proposed bill that passed the House on Thursday. Under current state law, that option can only be considered if a child is in the care of the Division of Child and Family Services.

HB46, sponsored by Rep. Sheryl L. Allen, R-Bountiful, would do away with that restriction.

The bill, requested by the Utah Adoption Council, now heads to the Senate. HB46 would give adoption agencies the right to seek a child's birth certificate to verify parentage, birth date and other information and would clarify the kinds of expenses adoptive parents may cover for a birth mother.

The new language would allow "tokens" to birth parents that are reasonable but would prevent payments that induce sale of a child, Allen said. It would make baby selling a third-degree felony. - Brooke Adams

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