**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 63‑19‑1440, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO COMMITMENT OF JUVENILES TO THE DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE, SO AS TO AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE TO ALLOW A JUVENILE WHO IS TEMPORARILY COMMITTED TO ITS CUSTODY, AFTER BEING ADJUDICATED FOR A STATUS OFFENSE, MISDEMEANOR OFFENSE, OR A PROBATION VIOLATION OR CONTEMPT, TO UNDERGO A COMMUNITY EVALUATION WITH CERTAIN SAFEGUARDS AND EXCEPTIONS.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Section 63‑19‑1440(C) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(C) The court, before committing a child as a delinquent or as a part of a sentence including commitments for contempt, shall order a community evaluation or temporarily commit the child to the Department of Juvenile Justice for not more than forty‑five days for evaluation. A community evaluation is equivalent to a residential evaluation, but it is not required to include all components of a residential evaluation. However, in either evaluation the department shall make a recommendation to the court on the appropriate disposition of the case and shall submit that recommendation to the court before final disposition. The department is authorized to allow any child adjudicated delinquent for a status offense, a misdemeanor offense, or violation of probation or contempt for any offense who is temporarily committed to the department’s custody for a residential evaluation, to reside in that child’s home or in his home community while undergoing a community evaluation, unless the committing judge finds and concludes in the order for evaluation, that a community evaluation of the child must not be conducted because the child presents an unreasonable flight or public safety risk to his home community. The court may waive in writing the evaluation of the child and proceed to issue final disposition in the case if the child:

(1) has previously received a residential evaluation or a community evaluation and the evaluation is available to the court;

(2) has been within the past year temporarily or finally discharged or conditionally released for parole from a correctional institution of the department, and the child’s previous evaluation or other equivalent information is available to the court; or

(3) receives a determinate commitment sentence not to exceed ninety days.”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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