

HB 219: UNIFORM UNREGULATED CHILD CUSTODY TRANSFER ACT

Sponsor: Rep. Merrill Nelson
Floor Sponsor: Sen. Mike McKell



What does this bill do?

This Bill:

- Strengthens existing code in preventing parents/guardians from transferring custody of their kids to other people for purposes of abandoning parental rights/obligations, except under certain conditions
- Authorizes the Division of Child and Family Services to assist families to preserve adoptions and protect children.

Why is this Bill Needed?

History:

- Before 2017, unregulated child custody transfers were common. Parents who sought to avoid their responsibilities/rights to the child could transfer their child to unknown persons online. Child-traffickers could easily take advantage of these lax laws to enslave and abuse children.
- In 2017 Utah enacted into law general recommendations from child welfare agencies, federal agencies, and Attorneys General to help mitigate the situation.
- In 2021, a more comprehensive and uniform Unregulated Child Custody Transfer Act was drafted by the Uniform Law Commission based on Utah's 2017 statute and original working group recommendations.

HB0219's passage is necessary to continue leading the way in child protection by enacting this uniform law to protect children from abandonment and abuse and ensure strong families.

We need to protect Utah's kids. Please support HB 219.