

June 21, 2008

The Honorable Alfred W. Speer  
Clerk of the House of Representatives  
State Capitol  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

Re: House Bill No. 283 by Representative Greene  
CHILDREN/CARE: Provides procedures for child in need of care proceedings

Dear Mr. Speer:

I have concerns with the changes proposed by House Bill No. 283 to the law relating to the disclosure of information during child in need of care proceedings. According to the Department of Social Services, current law strikes an appropriate balance between the need to discover relevant information and the need to safeguard against the unintended disclosure of confidential information maintained in agency files, such as identities, addresses, and information gained during private therapeutic sessions. Of greatest concern, HB 283 eliminates judicial discretion – replacing “the court may order” with “the court shall order” – and broadens the method of production from mere inspection of records to full civil discovery, which would include depositions of department employees and potentially others identified within the agency file.

For these reasons, I have vetoed House Bill No. 283 and am returning it to the House of Representatives.

Very truly yours,

Bobby Jindal  
Governor

jw