

For Immediate Release

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(Jackson, MS) – Governor Ronnie Musgrove has allowed House Bill 974 to become law without his signature. The legislation calls for screenings of juveniles within one hour of admission to a detention center and establishes a Juvenile Detention Facilities Task Force, but no funding is included for any of the programs in the bill.

“The intent is good,” Musgrove said, “but built-ins such as this are the reason agency heads are forced to deal with increased responsibilities, without the benefit of increased funding. In times of a national recession and tight budgets, you can’t continue to increase spending with no way to pay for it. We need to provide flexibility, rather than tie the hands of agency directors even more.”

The 15-member member Juvenile Detention Facilities Task Force is charged with developing a set of uniform standards for facilities statewide. The standards will address operations, programs and services, and staff training.

The bill will go into effect on July 1.

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