

SUMMARY SHEET

CONCERNING INCLUDING STAFF OF FREE-STANDING EMERGENCY FACILITIES AS PART OF COLORADO'S SAFE HAVEN LAWS.

Senators: **Smallwood**

Representatives: **Coleman, Marc Catlin**

Purpose

The bill expands Colorado's safe haven laws to include staff members of free-standing emergency facilities as persons allowed to take temporary physical custody of infants 72 hours old or younger when the infant is voluntarily surrendered by its parent or parents.

Background

Since the enactment of the safe haven law in 2000, 56 infants have been surrendered at safe havens. In 2016, five infants were surrendered at safe havens. 2017 data was not available at the time of this writing. When an infant is surrendered at a safe haven, the county department of social services assumes responsibility for the child and must initiate a motion to terminate the parental rights of the surrendering parent and place the infant in foster care as soon as possible. A parent that surrenders an infant at a place other than a safe haven could be charged with misdemeanor child abuse, felony child abuse, or another felony depending on whether the infant was harmed or killed as a result of the abandonment.

Bill Action

- Section 1 amended to define "Community Clinic Emergency Centers"
- Section 2 and Section 3 adds "Community Clinic Emergency Center" to multiple parts of the previous statutes in addition to hospitals and fire stations.
- Section 4 defines this bill as necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety.