

SB

218



Official Business

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Sponsor Statement CS SB 218 (FIN)

"An Act relating to the crimes of murder, manslaughter, and criminally negligent homicide and to homicides of children"

All too often, when a child is killed, even when the killer is convicted, they do not receive punishment commensurate with the severity of their actions. Tragically, this has especially been the case when very young children are killed. I believe these children, who are the most vulnerable members of our society, are owed far more than our criminal justice system has afforded them. CS SB 218 (JUD) makes the following changes to our criminal statutes:

- *amends current law by adding a new form of first degree murder when the death of a child results from the commission or attempted commission of kidnapping, or of a sexual offense,*
- *expands the list of offenses constituting felony murder to include sexual abuse of a minor in the first and second degrees,*
- *elevates criminally negligent homicide from a class C to a class B felony,*
- *establishes a twenty year mandatory minimum sentence for a person convicted of a murder of a child under the age of sixteen,*
- *increases the mandatory minimum sentence (from five to seven years) for manslaughter, when the victim is a child under the age of sixteen,*
- *establishes a new sentencing provision, which allows for a term of unsuspended imprisonment that exceeds the presumptive term, for certain felony offenses if the victim is a child under the age of 16.*

Children deserve a responsible level of care when they are entrusted to an adult. CS SB 218 (JUD) will help accomplish both the goals of deterrence and establishing a punishment more fitting the crime. Passage of this bill will correct serious deficiencies in our legal system. I urge your support.