

HB 570 -- OFFENSE OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT OF A CHILD

SPONSOR: Hurlbert

This bill modifies provisions relating to the offense of abuse or neglect of a child.

As specified in this bill, a person does not commit the offense of abuse or neglect of a child by virtue of the sole fact that the person allows the child to engage in independent activities without adult supervision, and that the person is a parent or guardian to the child, provided that:

- (1) Independent activities are appropriate based on the child's age, maturity, and physical and mental abilities; and
- (2) The lack of adult supervision does not constitute conduct that is so grossly negligent as to endanger the child's health or safety.

As defined in the bill, "independent activities" include traveling to or from school or nearby locations, either by bicycle or on foot; playing outdoors; or remaining at home for a reasonable period of time without adult supervision.

Additionally, the term "neglect" is modified to provide that it is not neglectful for a person to allow a child to engage in independent activities without adult supervision, provided that such activities are appropriate, based on the child's age, maturity, and physical and mental capabilities, and that the lack of adult supervision does not constitute negligent conduct.

This bill is similar to HB 1904 (2024).