



A MESSAGE FROM THE  
**OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS**

Avery D. Niles, Commissioner  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**DJJ COMMISSIONER'S STATEMENT:**  
**On the Passage of the Juvenile Justice Reform Bill in the Senate**

**(ATLANTA - GA)** Today, Department of Juvenile Justice Commissioner Avery D. Niles congratulated Governor Nathan Deal on the passage of Georgia's juvenile justice reform legislation in the Senate. Based on the recommendations of a special panel convened by Governor Deal, the goal of the legislation is to reduce the number of repeat juvenile offenders and bring down costs.

The reforms will provide judges with more discretion in juvenile case sentencing; offer more drug and mental health counseling; and place more emphasis on local community-based outreach programs rather than commitment to detention centers for non-violent juvenile offenders.

Commissioner Niles made the following statement regarding the passage of the Juvenile Justice Reform Bill in the Senate:

*"This bill represents landmark reform and positive change for the Georgia juvenile justice system if it passes.*

*First the legislation passed by unanimous vote in the Georgia House. Now it has passed in the Senate by another unanimous vote.*

*The reform bill speaks volumes about Governor Nathan Deal's leadership and his commitment to improving the lives of Georgia's youth.*

*We thank both the Special Council on Justice Reform for their dedication and the bill sponsors in the House and Senate.*

*Now, HB 242 transfers back to the House for approval of some changes made in the Senate Judiciary committee."*

**Avery D. Niles, Commissioner**  
**GA Department of Juvenile Justice**  
**(END RELEASE)**