

By: West, Lucio

S.B. No. 956

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to consideration of family violence in the risk assessment for international parental abduction of a child.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subsection (a), Section 153.502, Family Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) To determine whether there is a risk of the international abduction of a child by a parent of the child, the court shall consider evidence that the parent:

(1) has taken, enticed away, kept, withheld, or concealed a child in violation of another person's right of possession of or access to the child, unless the parent presents evidence that the parent believed in good faith that the parent's conduct was necessary to avoid imminent harm to the parent or the child;

(2) has previously threatened to take, entice away, keep, withhold, or conceal a child in violation of another person's right of possession of or access to the child;

(3) lacks financial reason to stay in the United States, including evidence that the parent is financially independent, is able to work outside of the United States, or is unemployed;

(4) has recently engaged in planning activities, other than planning activities related to carrying out a safety plan to

1 flee from family violence, that could facilitate the removal of the  
2 child from the United States by the parent, including:

- 3 (A) quitting a job;
- 4 (B) selling a primary residence;
- 5 (C) terminating a lease;
- 6 (D) closing bank accounts;
- 7 (E) liquidating other assets;
- 8 (F) hiding or destroying documents;
- 9 (G) applying for a passport or visa for the  
10 parent or the child; or

11 (H) applying to obtain the child's birth  
12 certificate or school or medical records;

13 (5) has a history of domestic violence that the court  
14 is required to consider under Section 153.004; or

15 (6) has a criminal history or a history of violating  
16 court orders.

17 SECTION 2. The changes in law made by this Act apply to a  
18 suit affecting the parent-child relationship or suit for  
19 modification pending in a trial court on the effective date of this  
20 Act or filed on or after the effective date of this Act.

21 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
22 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
23 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
24 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
25 Act takes effect September 1, 2007.