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Representative Darryl Rouson files HB 787: The Child Abduction Prevention Act

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. -- According to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, 350,000 child abductions by a member of the child's family occur each year. Thousands more go unreported.

House Bill 787, filed this week by Representative Darryl Rouson (D-St. Petersburg), addresses the complex and tragic issue of family child abduction. Representative Rouson is deeply committed to addressing the welfare of some of our most vulnerable members of society, its children.

"I am horrified that child abductions by family members are occurring at such a high rate," Representative Darryl Rouson said. "This legislation gives judges more discretion and the ability to fight family child abductions so our children remain safe. We can prevent these abductions and save the courts lengthy and costly litigation."

The Child Abduction Prevention Act adds risk factors a court may consider when determining whether children are at risk of abduction, domestic or international. If the judge determines there is a credible risk of the child being abducted, the act empowers them to choose appropriate preventive measures to help prevent the child from being abducted.

The purpose of imposing these measures is to deter the potential abduction of an at-risk child. By identifying risks and initiating additional safeguards, Florida's courts are more likely to see a reduction in litigation and the need for involvement of law enforcement agencies is expected to be reduced.

"The paramount concern is always the best interest and safety of Florida's children," Representative Rouson said.

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