SB236

182154-2

By Senator Ward

RFD: Health and Human Services

First Read: 23-FEB-17
SYNOPSIS: Under existing law, the term day care center is defined as a child care facility that receives more than 12 children for daytime care. The term includes child care centers, day nurseries, nursery schools, pre-kindergartens, kindergartens, and play groups, including those that are operated as part of a private school if they provide care for more than four hours a day.

Also under existing law, child care facilities that are part of a church or nonprofit religious school are exempt from licensing by the Department of Human Resources.

This bill would establish the Child Care Safety Act.

This bill would revise the definition of day care center to include preschools.

This bill would remove the exemption from licensure for child care facilities that are part of a church or nonprofit religious school by
requiring such facilities to be licensed by the Department of Human Resources.

This bill would clarify that the licensing of a faith-based child care facility may not be construed to infringe upon the rights of the facility to teach or practice a religion.

This bill would also revise the criminal history background information check required for certain individuals.

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT

Relating to child care facilities; to amend Sections 13A-6-29, 38-7-2, 38-7-3, 38-13-2, and 38-13-3, Code of Alabama 1975; to establish the Child Care Safety Act; to revise the definition of day care center to include preschools; to remove the exemption from licensure by the Department of Human Resources of preschool programs that are part of a church or nonprofit religious school; to clarify that the licensing of a faith-based child care facility may not be construed to infringe upon the rights of the facility to teach or practice a religion; and to revise the criminal history background information check required for certain individuals.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:
Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the Child Care Safety Act.

Section 2. Sections 13A-6-29, 38-7-2, 38-7-3, 38-13-2, and 38-13-3, Code of Alabama 1975, are amended to read as follows:

"§13A-6-29.

(a) As used in this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(1) MEDICALLY PRESCRIBED. In accordance with a physician's prescription or in accordance with age-appropriate directions for the over-the-counter medication.

(2) NEAR FATALITY. An act that, as certified by a physician, places the child in serious or critical condition.

(b) There is established the crime of administration of medication by the owner, operator, or employee of a licensed or statutorily exempt child care facility with the intent to drug the child or alter the child's behavior beyond what is medically prescribed or with the reckless disregard for the health, safety, and welfare of the child.

(c) A violation of subsection (b) is punishable as follows:

(1) A violation which does not cause or contributes to the death, near fatality, dismemberment, or permanent disability of a child is a Class C felony.
(2) A violation which causes a near fatality, dismemberment, or permanent disability of a child is a Class B felony.

(3) A violation which causes the death of a child is a Class A felony.

§38-7-2.

Terms used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires, have the meanings ascribed to them in this section. When not inconsistent with the context, words used in the present tense include the future, words in the singular number include the plural number, and words in the plural number include the singular number, and the word "shall" is always mandatory and not merely directory:

(1) CHILD. Any person under 19 years of age, a person under the continuing jurisdiction of the juvenile court pursuant to Section 12-15-117, or a person under 21 years of age in foster care as defined by the Department of Human Resources.

(2) CHILD-CARE INSTITUTION or INSTITUTION FOR CHILD CARE. A child-care facility where more than 10 children are received and maintained for the purpose of providing them with care or training or both, or transitional living program services, but does not include:

a. Any institution for child care which is under the ownership or control, or both, of the State of Alabama, or which is operated or certified or licensed by another agency or department of the State of Alabama;
"b. Any juvenile detention home established and operated by the State of Alabama;

c. Any bona fide boarding school in which children are primarily taught branches of education corresponding to those taught in public schools, grades 1 through 12, or taught in public elementary schools, high schools, or both elementary and high schools.

"(3) CHILD-PLACING AGENCY. A public or private child-care facility which receives, places, or arranges for the placement of any child or children in adoptive or foster family homes or other facilities for child care apart from the custody of the child's or children's parents. The term "child-placing agency" includes, but is not limited to, all agencies established and maintained by a municipality or other political subdivision of the State of Alabama to protect, guard, train, or care for children outside their own homes, but does not include any circuit court or juvenile court or any duly appointed juvenile probation officer or youth counselor of the court who receives and places children under an order of the court.

"(4) DAY CARE CENTER. Any child-care facility receiving more than 12 children for daytime care during all or part of a day. The term "day care center" includes, but is not limited to, facilities commonly called "child-care centers," "day nurseries," "nursery schools," "pre-kindergartens," "preschools," "kindergartens," and "play groups," with or without stated educational purposes. The term further
includes, but is not limited to, pre-kindergarten, preschool, kindergarten, or nursery schools or other daytime programs operated as a part of a private school and receiving children younger than lawful school age for daytime care for more than four hours a day, with or without stated educational purposes. The term does not include any of the following:

"a. Kindergartens or nursery schools or other daytime programs operated by public elementary systems or secondary level school units or institutions of higher learning.

"b. Kindergartens or nursery schools or other daytime programs, with or without stated educational purposes, operating no more than four hours a day and receiving children younger than lawful school age.

"c. Kindergartens or nursery schools or other daytime programs operated as a part of a private school and receiving children younger than lawful school age for four hours a day or less, with or without stated educational purposes.

"d. Facilities operated for more than four hours a day in connection with a shopping center or service or other similar facility, where transient children are cared for temporarily while parents or custodians of the children are occupied on the premises or are in the immediate vicinity and readily available. The facilities shall meet local and state fire and health requirements.
"e. Any type of day care center that is conducted on federal government premises.

"f. Special activities programs for children of lawful school age including, but not limited to, athletics, crafts instruction and similar activities conducted on an organized and periodic basis by civic, charitable, and governmental organizations provided local and state fire and health requirements are met.

"(5) DAY CARE HOME. A child-care facility which is a family home and which receives not more than six children for care during the day.

"(6) DEPARTMENT. The Department of Human Resources of the State of Alabama.

"(7) FACILITY FOR CHILD CARE or CHILD-CARE FACILITY. A facility established by any person, group of persons, agency, association, or organization, whether established for gain or otherwise, who or which receives or arranges for care or placement of one or more children, unrelated to the operator of the facility, apart from the parents, with or without the transfer of the right of custody, in any facility as defined in this chapter, established and maintained for the care of children.

"(8) FOSTER FAMILY HOME. A child-care facility in a residence of a family where the family receives a child or children, unrelated to that family, for the purpose of providing family care or therapeutic family care and training,
or transitional living program services on a full-time basis.
The types of foster family homes are defined as follows:

"a. Boarding home. A foster family home wherein the foster family receives a child or children and receives payment for their care. The number of children so received shall not exceed six, unless the children are of common parentage.

"b. Free home. A foster home which does not receive payment for the care of a child or children and which may or may not receive the child or children for the purpose of adoption.

"(9) GROUP DAY CARE HOME. A child-care facility which is a family home and which receives at least seven but no more than 12 children for care during part of the day where there are at least two adults present and supervising the activities.

"(10) GROUP HOME. A child-care facility where at least seven but not more than 10 children are received and maintained for the purpose of providing them with care or training or both, or transitional living program services.

"(11) MATERNITY CENTER. A facility in which any person, agency, or corporation receives or cares for one or more minor pregnant girls, except that the term does not include hospitals.

"(12) NIGHT CARE FACILITY. A child-care facility which is a center or a family home receiving a child or
children for care during the night. A "night care facility" is further defined as follows:

"a. Nighttime center. A facility which is established to receive more than 12 children for nighttime care.

"b. Nighttime home. A family home which receives no more than six children for nighttime care.

c. Group nighttime home. A child-care facility which is a family home which receives at least seven but no more than 12 children for nighttime care and where there are at least two adults present and supervising the activities.

"(13) RELATED. Any of the following relationships by blood, marriage, or adoption: Parent, grandparent, brother, sister, stepparent, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother, half sister, uncle or aunt, and their spouses.

"(14) TRANSITIONAL LIVING FACILITY. A child-care facility or program that is designed to give opportunities to practice independent living skills to eligible persons at least 16 years of age and under 21 years of age in foster care in a variety of residential settings with varying degrees of care and supervision.

"S38-7-3.

"No person, group of persons, or corporation may operate or conduct any facility for child care, as defined in this chapter, without being licensed or approved as provided in this chapter; provided, however, that nothing in this section or in this chapter prohibits an employee of the}
department from carrying out the duties of the department as
provided in this title or infringes upon the religious
teaching or practices of a licensed faith-based facility for
child care. Provided, further, the provisions of this chapter
shall not apply to preschool programs which are an integral
part of a local church ministry or a religious nonprofit
elementary school, and are so recognized in the church or
school's documents, whether operated separately or as a part
of a religious nonprofit elementary school unit, secondary
school unit or institution of higher learning under the
governing board or authority of said local church or its
convention, association, or regional body to which it may be
subject; provided that notice is filed by the governing board
or authority of the church or school with the department that
said church or school meets the definition of a local church
ministry or a religious nonprofit elementary school under
terms of this section and are exempt from regulation by the
department and a notice of intent to operate said programs is
given to the appropriate fire and health departments so that
said facilities shall be inspected in accordance with the
state and local fire and health requirements for such
programs. In addition, all exempt churches hereunder shall
publish annually, on church letterhead, a notice to the
department certifying that the following records are being
maintained by the church: fire and health inspection reports;
immunization verifications for all children; medical history
forms for all staff and children and that the following
information shall be available to parents or guardian prior to enrolling their children in said church ministry; staff qualifications; pupil-staff ratio; discipline policies; type of curriculum used in the learning program; the religious teachings to be given each child; and the type of lunch program available; provided further that prior to enrolling and annually thereafter parents or guardian and a responsible individual representing the governing board as authority of the church or school be required to sign and file with the department the affidavits provided by this section that the parents or guardian have been notified by said responsible individual that the church or school has filed notice and is exempt from regulation by the department. The district attorney of the county in which the preschool program is located shall, upon proper presentment of charges, investigate at his discretion any allegations against any such church under the laws of the State of Alabama.

"Form of Affidavit for Parent/Guardian

"STATE OF ALABAMA

"COUNTY OF____

"Before me, a notary public in and for said state and county, appeared _____ and is known to me, after being duly sworn or affirmed, says as follows:

"That affiant is the parent or legal guardian of the minor child/children _____; that affiant has been notified by _____, a representative of _____ church/school, that said
church or school has filed notice and is exempt under law from
regulation by the Department of Human Resources.

"______ Parent/Legal Guardian

"Sworn, or affirmed to and subscribed before me this
____ day of _____, 20__

"Form of Affidavit for Church/School

"STATE OF ALABAMA

"COUNTY OF_____

Before me, a notary public in and for said state and
county, appeared _____ and is known to me, after being duly
sworn or affirmed says as follows:

"That affiant is the designated representative of
_____ church/school and that the below listed
parents/guardians have been notified prior to
enrollment/reenrollment that _____ church/school has filed
notice with and is exempt under law from regulation by the
Department of Human Resources: ______

"_______________ Representative

"Sworn or affirmed to and subscribed before me this
____ day of _____, 20__.

"_______________ Notary Public

"§38-13-2.

"When used in this chapter, the following words
shall have the following meanings:

"(1) ADULT. An individual 19 years of age and older.

"(2) ADULT CARE FACILITY. A person or entity holding

a Department of Human Resources license or approval or
certification to provide care, including foster care, for adults.

"(3) APPLICANT. A person or entity who submits an application for license as a child care or adult care facility to the Department of Human Resources or a child placing agency, or an application for employment or for a volunteer position to a Department of Human Resources licensed child care or adult care facility. With regards to child care and adult care facilities in a home setting, the term includes an adult household member whose residence is in the home. The term also includes an individual who submits an application for a volunteer position or for employment with the Department of Human Resources in a position in which the person has unsupervised access to children, adults, or individuals with disabilities as one of the essential functions of the job. The term also includes an applicant for approval as an adoptive parent of a child or as a foster parent of an adult or child.

"(4) AUTOMATED SYSTEM. The computerized, automated fingerprint identification system (AFIS) maintained by the Department of Public Safety Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency that allows for a computer search of the in-state database for criminal history background check information maintained by the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center (ACJIC). The system contains criminal history background information for fingerprint-based and name-based searches.
"(5) CARE. The provision of care, treatment, education, training, instruction, supervision, or recreation to children, adults, or individuals with disabilities.

"(6) CARETAKER SETTING. A building, structure, or location, public or private property, or vehicle, utilized for or involved in the providing of care, education, training, instruction, or supervision of children, adults, or individuals with disabilities or transportation in connection with activity provided by a licensed, approved, or certified child or adult care facility.

"(7) CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER. The Commissioner of the Department of Human Resources, the director of a county department of human resources, or the head of an employer covered by this chapter, but not specifically enumerated.

"(8) CHILD or CHILDREN. An individual under 19 years of age.

"(9) CHILD CARE FACILITY. A person or entity holding a Department of Human Resources license, permit, or approval to provide child care, including foster care, under Chapter 7 of this title. The term excludes exempt child care facilities.

"(10) CHILD PLACING AGENCY. A person or entity licensed by the Department of Human Resources under Chapter 7 of this title, issuing approvals to foster family homes and adoptive homes.

"(11) CONVICTION. A determination of guilt as the result of a plea, including a plea of nolo contendere, or a trial.
"(12) CRIMINAL HISTORY BACKGROUND INFORMATION CHECK. The review of any and all records containing any information collected and stored in the criminal record repository of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center, and the Alabama Department of Public Safety State Law Enforcement Agency involving an arrest or conviction by a criminal justice agency, including, but not limited to, child abuse crime information as defined by 42 U.S.C. § 5119, the National Child Protection Act of 1993, conviction record information, fingerprint cards, correctional data and release information, and identifiable descriptions and notations of convictions. Criminal history background information shall not include any analytical records or investigative reports that contain intelligence information or criminal investigation information.

"(13) CURRENT. An individual who is presently employed, licensed, or approved, or working as a volunteer on November 1, 2000.

"(14) DAILY LIVING TASKS. Activities of daily living, including walking, working, learning, grooming and hygiene, bathing, dressing, eating, cooking, cleaning, shopping, transportation, managing money, maintaining a residence, writing, and using telephones, computers, and other automated communication devices.

"(15) ELDERLY. An individual 65 years of age or older.
(16) EMPLOYEE. An individual currently in the service of an employer for compensation, full-time or part-time, and employed by contract or at will, in which the employer has the authority to control the person in the material details of how work shall be performed and when compensation shall be provided.

(17) EMPLOYER. An individual, person, group of persons, association, partnership, corporation, limited liability company or partnership, business, or other entity which hires employees, has volunteers, or contracts with others to provide personnel to work with or provide care to children, adults, or individuals with disabilities in a caretaker setting.

(18) ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS. The fundamental, not merely marginal, job duties of the employment as determined by a written job description or the judgment of the employer.

(19) EXEMPT CARE FACILITY. A person or entity exempt by law from licensure by the Department of Human Resources, or a child placing agency, including church day care, child centers, or elder centers

(20) INDIVIDUAL. A natural person.

(21) INDIVIDUAL WITH DISABILITIES. A person with a mental or physical impairment who requires assistance to perform one or more daily living tasks.

(22) LAW ENFORCEMENT. The sheriff's department of a county or the police department of a municipality.
"(23) LICENSE. A license, permit, certification, approval, registration, or other form of permission required by law by whatever designation for a child care facility, adult care facility, child placing agency, foster parent or foster home, adoptive parent or adoptive home, or any other person or entity in which an individual has unsupervised access to children, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities.

"(24) LICENSED SOCIAL WORKER. A social worker licensed by the Alabama State Board of Social Work Examiners to conduct family home studies and psychosocial assessments in adoptive or custody cases by court order or for treatment not otherwise required to conduct a criminal history check.

"(25) LICENSEE. Holder of a license or approval and an adult household member whose residence is in the home in regards to child care and adult care facilities in a home setting.

"(26) PERSON or ENTITY. A natural person, sometimes referred to as an individual, an owner or operator of any adult care facility, child care facility, child placing agency, exempt child care facility, or licensee, whether an individual, corporation, limited liability company or partnership, partnership, association, or other legal entity or group, and a board member, an officer, member, or partner of an entity who has direct contact with children, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities in care.
"(27) REASONABLE SUSPICION. Belief by a prudent person that reasonable articulable grounds exist to suspect that the employee's past or present behavior should be reviewed to determine if such behavior or conduct bears upon the individual's fitness to teach or supervise or have responsibility for the safety and well-being of children, the elderly, or persons with disabilities as defined in this chapter.

"(28) REPORT. A written statement of criminal history background information.

"(29) RESIDENCE. Place of abode, domicile, or dwelling with intention to remain permanently and continuously or for an indefinite or uncertain length of time.

"(30) SEX CRIME. Includes the following:

"a. Enticing a child to enter a vehicle, room, house, office, or any other place for immoral purposes, as proscribed by Section 13A-6-69.

"b. Incest, when the offender is an adult and the victim is a minor, as proscribed by Section 13A-13-3.

"c. Kidnapping of a minor, except by a parent, in the first or second degree, as proscribed by Section 13A-6-43 or Section 13A-6-44.

"d. Promoting prostitution in the first or second degree, as proscribed by Section 13A-12-111 or Section 13A-12-112.

"e. Rape in the first or second degree, as proscribed by Section 13A-6-61 or Section 13A-6-62.
"f. Sexual misconduct, as proscribed by Section 13A-6-65.

g. Sexual torture, as proscribed by Section 13A-6-65.1.

h. Sexual abuse in the first or second degree, as proscribed by Section 13A-6-66 or Section 13A-6-67.

i. Sodomy in the first or second degree, as proscribed by Section 13A-6-63 or Section 13A-6-64.

j. Soliciting a child by computer for the purposes of committing a sexual act and transmitting obscene material to a child by computer as proscribed by Sections 13A-6-110 and 13A-6-111.

k. Violation of the Alabama Child Pornography Act, as proscribed by Section 13A-12-191, 13A-12-192, 13A-12-196, or 13A-12-197.

l. Any solicitation, attempt, or conspiracy to commit any of the offenses listed in paragraphs a. to k., inclusive.

m. A crime listed in the Alabama Sex Offender Registration and Community Notification Act, Chapter 20A of Title 15.

n. Conviction for a violation or attempted violation of an offense committed outside the State of Alabama or under federal law is a sex crime or any other crime if the offense would be a crime in Alabama.

(31) SUITABILITY CRITERIA.
"a. Convictions for any of the following crimes shall make an individual unsuitable for employment, volunteer work, approval, or licensure:

1. Murder, manslaughter, or criminally negligent homicide.

2. A sex crime.

3. A crime that involves the physical or mental injury or maltreatment of a child, the elderly, or an individual with disabilities.

4. A crime committed against a child.

5. A crime involving the sale or distribution of a controlled substance.

6. Robbery.

7. A crime or offense committed in another state or under federal law which would constitute any of the above crimes in this state.

"b. Conviction for any crime listed in the Adoption and Safe Families Act, 42 U.S.C. § 671(a)(20) shall disqualify a person from being approved or continuing to be approved as a foster parent or adoptive parent and a convicted person shall be deemed unsuitable for employment, volunteer work, approval, or licensure as a foster parent or adoptive parent.

"c. The Department of Human Resources may set other disqualifying convictions by rule under the Administrative Procedure Act, Section 41-22-1, et seq., for Department of Human Resources licensed child or adult care facilities.
"(32) SUITABILITY DETERMINATION. A decision that an individual is or is not suitable for employment, volunteer work, or licensure based upon the existence of a prohibited criminal conviction.

"(33) UNSUPERVISED ACCESS TO A CHILD OR CHILDREN, THE ELDERLY, OR AN INDIVIDUAL WITH DISABILITIES. Contacts, interviews, questions, examinations, interaction, or communications outside the presence, supervision, and control of someone other than a child or elderly or disabled individual in care during the provision of care, education, training, instruction, supervision, or other employment or license related activities.

"(34) VOLUNTEER. An individual who provides services without an express or implied promise of compensation, but shall not include the parent, family member, legal custodian, or legal guardian of a child, the elderly, or disabled individual in care.

"(35) WRITTEN CONSENT. A signed statement by the applicant or employee containing all of the following:

"a. The name, address, date of birth, race, gender, and Social Security number appearing on a valid identification document as defined in subsection (d) of 18 U.S.C. § 1028. If the applicant does not have a Social Security number because of sincerely held personal beliefs, the Social Security number shall not be required and the Department of Human Resources and the Department of Public Safety.
Enforcement Agency shall provide an alternative means of identification and procedure.

"b. Notice to the applicant or employee of the right to obtain a copy of the criminal history background information check report, challenge the accuracy and completeness of any information contained in the report, and to obtain a prompt determination as to the validity of a challenge.

c. Name, address, and telephone number of the employer or licensing entity for which the criminal history background information check report is being sought.

d. Release of the criminal history background information check report to the Department of Human Resources.

§38-13-3.

"(a) On November 1, 2000, every employer, child care facility, adult care facility, the Department of Human Resources, and child placing agency shall request the Department of Public Safety Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency to conduct a criminal history background information check for the following:

"(1) An employment applicant, employee or volunteer of an employer, child care facility, adult care facility, or child placing agency.

"(2) A current foster parent for a child or adult or adult household member of a foster family or applicant and an adult household member of a foster family seeking approval to operate as a foster parent or foster family home for a child
placing agency or the Department of Human Resources. Unless otherwise provided in this chapter, no criminal history background information check shall be conducted on a current foster parent or household member of a foster family if a Federal Bureau of Investigation and Alabama Department of Public Safety State Law Enforcement Agency criminal history background information check has already been conducted under other law that meets the suitability criteria as provided in this chapter. Subsequent arrests or convictions of foster parents, or arrests or convictions entered into the automated system subsequent to the initial report, shall be sent by the Department of Public Safety Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency to the Department of Human Resources as provided in this chapter.

"(3) An applicant or employee, with the exception of those individuals on employed status on November 1, 2000, in a position in the Department of Human Resources which requires unsupervised access to children, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities as one of the essential functions of the job. All current employees of the Department of Human Resources shall be subjected to a criminal history background information check upon reasonable suspicion. Criminal history background information checks shall be required for prospective and current personnel under contract with the Department of Human Resources or working with another entity under contract with the Department of Human Resources, students, mentors, and volunteers in positions requiring
unsupervised access to children, the elderly, or persons with
disabilities as one of the essential functions of the job. The
Department of Human Resources shall pay any fees related to
checks required pursuant to this subdivision.

"(4) A current licensee or applicant for a license
through the Department of Human Resources to operate a child
care or adult care facility.

"(5) An adoptive parent applicant for a child
adoptive placement through the Department of Human Resources
or child placing agency and any Department of Human Resources
or child placing agency approved adoptive parent prior to
entry of a final decree of adoption. Unless otherwise provided
in this chapter, no criminal history background information
check shall be conducted on a current adoptive parent or
household member of an adoptive family if a Federal Bureau of
Investigation and Alabama Department of Public Safety State
Law Enforcement Agency criminal history background information
check has already been conducted under other law that meets
the suitability criteria as provided in this chapter.
Subsequent arrests or convictions of adoptive parents, or
arrests or convictions entered into the automated system
subsequent to the initial report, shall be sent by the
Department of Public Safety Alabama State Law Enforcement
Agency to the Department of Human Resources as elsewhere
provided in this chapter.

"(b) An employer, child care facility, adult care
facility, the Department of Human Resources, or a child
placing agency may only request a criminal history background
information check by its chief executive officer, or his or
her designee authorized in writing and notarized, and law
enforcement shall render assistance, including assistance in
obtaining fingerprints required for submission of a request to
the Department of Public Safety Alabama State Law Enforcement
Agency.

"(c) Every employee, volunteer or applicant, for
employment or a volunteer position, licensee, Department of
Human Resources adoptive parent applicant or approved adoptive
parent, or applicant for a license to the Department of Human
Resources to operate a child care or adult care facility shall
submit two sets of fingerprints and sign a written consent to
obtain the criminal history background information.
Fingerprints shall not be required when a disability prevents
a person from being fingerprinted. Disabilities preventing
fingerprinting include the loss of both hands, severe scarring
of all fingers, closed paralytic hands, and similar
disabilities. In cases involving disability, a written consent
to obtain available criminal history background information by
name only shall be obtained. No one who fails or refuses to
give written consent or submit fingerprints necessary to
obtain criminal history background information may be
employed, allowed to perform volunteer or other work, approved
or issued a license, or allowed to retain a license or
approval by the Department of Human Resources, an employer,
(d) Child care facilities or adult care facilities exempt from Department of Human Resources licensing shall not be required to comply with this chapter, but may voluntarily collect and forward two complete acceptable sets of fingerprints, the written consent, and nonrefundable fee from applicants or employees to the Department of Public Safety Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency to request a criminal history background information check which shall be processed pursuant to this chapter. Licensed social workers conducting home studies may also request a criminal history background check which shall be processed pursuant to this chapter. Provided, however, if a license exempt child care facility operated as part of a church ministry or religious school does not choose to comply with this chapter on a voluntary basis, then the employee or prospective employee of the child care facility shall request a criminal history background check, and the request shall be processed in the same manner as for other employees or applicants under the provisions of this chapter. The Department of Human Resources shall, prior to the disbursement of any subsidized child care funds, require all employees and applicants of legally operating child care facilities to submit verification of the application for a criminal history background check and the results thereof when obtained. Upon reasonable suspicion that the individual has a criminal conviction or has not had a
criminal history background check conducted, the Department of Human Resources shall have the right to require employees of license-exempt child care or adult care facilities to submit each application for a criminal history background check and the results thereof when obtained."

Section 3. A child care facility that is an integral part of a church or nonprofit religious school shall be licensed in accordance with Chapter 7, Title 38, Code of Alabama 1975, no later than August 1, 2018.

Section 4. This act shall become effective immediately following its passage and approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law, and the amendatory language of Section 38-7-3, relating to a child care facility that is an integral part of a church or nonprofit religious school, shall become operative August 1, 2018.