

**Press Release**  
**For Immediate Release**

## **“Winston’s Law” Aims to Provide Harsher Penalties for Child Abusers**

**Montgomery, Ala. – New legislation will be proposed that would provide more severe penalties for child abusers whose victims are under the age of six. The goal of the proposed bill is to provide increased protection for young children who may not yet be in a setting where a mandated reporter would be able to access them, such as a school.**

District Attorney in the 19<sup>th</sup> Circuit, Randall Houston submitted the proposal in December. On January 11<sup>th</sup>, Senator Clyde Chambliss (R), District 30, agreed to sponsor the bill into the Senate.

This proposed bill comes after then four year old Winston, was found unresponsive and suffering from injuries in the back seat of his mother’s boyfriend’s truck in Panama City, FL. Deputies found Winston under a blanket with his eyes open, dried blood on his lips and a laceration on his head. He was found next to a bag containing several loaded handguns and was later found to have drugs in his system.

“Winston’s Law” would add an additional class to Alabama’s child abuse law. The proposed Class A Felony, would be punishable by a minimum of 10 years and up to 99 years or life. “Winston’s Law” would also carry the same range of punishment as attempted murder.

Currently, Alabama law has child abuse as a Class C Felony and aggravated child abuse as a Class B Felony. Class C is punishable by a minimum of 1 year-and-1-day up to 10 years in prison, and a Class B aggravated child abuse charge can carry between 10-20 years in prison.

Winston’s father, Joey Crampton, says, “Children are suffering and will continue to suffer from abuse. While we may not be able to prevent child abuse in itself, the reality is the effects of it lasts a lifetime for these young victims. Those who perpetrate these types of crimes need harsher punishments to deter them, but also because the children, unfortunately, will carry the effects into adulthood and may never be able to develop in a healthy, normal way. Sadly, the perpetrators of the crimes go on with their lives. What better way to serve this vulnerable population, by seeking much needed change through new legislative efforts in Winston’s honor. This ensures what Winston has endured will not be in vain.”

Winston’s alleged abuser, his mother, Hallee McLeod, currently sits in an Elmore County jail on \$300,000 bond. The alleged abuser, McLeod’s boyfriend, Scott Hicks, currently sits in a Bay County jail on no bond.

Winston is currently living with his father, stepmother, and siblings and recently celebrated his fifth birthday.

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