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An Act To Ensure the Availability of In-person Visitation in County Jails

CONCEPT DRAFT SUMMARY

This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208.

This bill proposes to enact measures designed to ensure the availability in county jails of in-person visitation between a prisoner and a visitor of the prisoner. In addition to requiring that all prisoners have the opportunity for in-person visits in county jails, such measures may include:

1. Limiting conditions on in-person visits to only those conditions and limitations required for safety and security, except that the jail may provide video-only visitation if needed for a particular prisoner's safety and security or may provide video-only visitation on a short-term basis if the jail is unable to provide a safe and secure location for in-person visitation;
2. Requiring opportunities for informal communication between a prisoner and a visitor of the prisoner, including opportunities for physical contact, and prohibiting the use of devices that preclude physical contact except in cases of substantiated security risk; or
3. Establishing a minimum number of in-person visit opportunities per week; requiring that video visitation be used only as a supplement to, and not a replacement of, in-person visitation; ensuring that video visitation service fees are affordable for prisoners and their families; and using, as a reward for good behavior, a certain number of free video visits per month.