

Assembly Bill No. 353—Assemblymen Gerhardt, Buckley, Leslie, Conklin, Arberry, Atkinson, Beers, Bobzien, Claborn, Denis, Goedhart, Goicoechea, Hogan, Kihuen, Koivisto, Manendo, McClain, Mortenson, Munford, Ocegüera, Ohrenschall, Parks, Pierce, Segerblom, Smith, Stewart and Womack

CHAPTER.....

AN ACT relating to parental rights; providing for the restoration of parental rights in certain circumstances; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel's Digest:

Existing law provides for the termination of parental rights in certain circumstances. (NRS 128.010-128.160) Existing law further provides that a court cannot change, modify or set aside an order terminating parental rights. (NRS 128.120) Existing law also provides for the voluntary relinquishment of parental rights. (NRS 127.040)

Section 2 of this bill authorizes a child who has not been adopted and whose natural parent has had his parental rights terminated or has relinquished his parental rights to petition a court for the restoration of parental rights. In addition, the legal custodian or legal guardian of such a child may petition for the restoration of parental rights. The natural parent must consent to the petition. **Section 3** of this bill provides for the notice that must be given before a hearing is held on the petition and requires that certain persons be afforded an opportunity to present evidence and testify during the hearing. **Section 4** of this bill provides for the court to hold a hearing when a valid petition is filed and specifies certain findings that must be made for the court to grant the petition, including that the child is not likely to be adopted and that the restoration of parental rights is in the best interests of the child.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Chapter 128 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto the provisions set forth as sections 2, 3 and 4 of this act.

Sec. 2. 1. *A child who has not been adopted and whose natural parent or parents have had their parental rights terminated or have relinquished their parental rights, or the legal custodian or guardian of such a child, may petition a court for the restoration of the parental rights of the natural parent or parents of the child.*

2. The natural parent or parents for whom restoration of parental rights is sought to be restored must consent in writing to the petition.

Sec. 3. 1. *Before a hearing is held on a petition that is filed pursuant to section 2 of this act, the court shall direct the clerk to issue a notice, reciting briefly the substance of the petition and*



stating the date set for the hearing thereof, and requiring the person served therewith to appear before the court at the time and place if that person desires to provide testimony or evidence concerning the petition.

2. The following persons must be personally served with the notice:

(a) The natural parent or parents for whom parental rights are sought to be restored;

(b) The legal custodian and the legal guardian of the child who is the subject of the petition;

(c) If the parental rights of the natural parent or parents for whom parental rights are sought to be restored were terminated, the person or governmental entity that petitioned for the termination if different from the persons notified pursuant to paragraph (b); and

(d) The attorney of record of the child who is the subject of the petition or, if none, the child.

3. The persons who are served with notice pursuant to subsection 2 must be provided an opportunity to present testimony and evidence during the hearing.

Sec. 4. 1. If a valid petition is filed pursuant to section 2 of this act, the court shall hold a hearing to determine whether to restore the parental rights of the natural parent or parents.

2. Before granting a petition for the restoration of parental rights, the court must find that:

(a) If any child who is the subject of the petition is 14 years of age or older, the child consents to the restoration of parental rights.

(b) The natural parent or parents for whom restoration of parental rights is sought have been informed of the legal obligations, rights and consequences of the restoration of parental rights and that the natural parent or parents are willing and able to accept such obligations, rights and consequences.

3. If the court finds the necessary facts pursuant to subsection 2, the court shall order the restoration of parental rights if the court further finds by a preponderance of the evidence that:

(a) The child is not likely to be adopted; and

(b) Restoration of parental rights of the natural parent or parents is in the best interests of the child.

4. If the court restores the parental rights of the natural parent or parents of a child who is less than 14 years of age, the court shall specify in its order the factual basis for its findings that



it is in the best interests of the child to restore the parental rights of the natural parent or parents.

5. Upon the entry of an order for the restoration of parental rights issued pursuant to this section, any child who is the subject of the petition becomes the legal child of the natural parent or parents whose rights have been restored, and they shall become his legal parents on that date with all the rights and duties of parents.

Sec. 5. NRS 128.100 is hereby amended to read as follows:

128.100 1. In any proceeding for terminating parental rights, or any rehearing or appeal thereon, *or any proceeding for restoring parental rights*, the court may appoint an attorney to represent the child as his counsel and, if the child does not have a guardian ad litem appointed pursuant to NRS 432B.500, as his guardian ad litem. The child may be represented by an attorney at all stages of any proceedings for terminating parental rights. If the child is represented by an attorney, the attorney has the same authority and rights as an attorney representing a party to the proceedings.

2. If the parent or parents of the child desire to be represented by counsel, but are indigent, the court may appoint an attorney for them.

3. Each attorney appointed under the provisions of this section is entitled to the same compensation and expenses from the county as provided in NRS 7.125 and 7.135 for attorneys appointed to represent persons charged with crimes.

Sec. 6. NRS 128.120 is hereby amended to read as follows:

128.120 Any order made and entered by the court under the provisions of NRS 128.110 is conclusive and binding upon the person declared to be free from the custody and control of his parent or parents, and upon all other persons who have been served with notice by publication or otherwise, as provided by this chapter. After the making of the order, *except as otherwise provided in section 4 of this act*, the court has no power to set aside, change or modify it, but nothing in this chapter impairs the right of appeal.

