



## Florida Sheriffs Support Holding Prolific Juvenile Offenders Accountable

The Florida Sheriffs Association strongly supports diversion programs for youth and providing second chances to first time juvenile offenders. However, many counties in Florida are experiencing a high number of auto thefts, vehicle burglaries, robberies, and car jackings being committed by a small number of repeat juvenile offenders. These high recidivism rates are due to juveniles who are not concerned with the consequences for the crimes committed because, in many cases, there are very limited or no consequences.

Under current law, the state's a 21-day maximum for pre-adjudicatory detention and 15-day maximum for pre-disposition detention care are not tolled when it is alleged that a juvenile has violated nonsecure detention care, which is commonly referred to as "home detention."

For example, a juvenile commits an auto theft, or even multiple auto thefts during a short period, while awaiting the adjudicatory hearing, he or she:

- Can be held in **secure detention**. However, the maximum time he or she can be held is 21-days. After 21-days, the juvenile must be released and is placed back in the community where he or she typically reoffends.
- Can also be placed on **nonsecure detention**. The period on home detention counts against the 21-day limit, so the courts are virtually powerless to hold these juveniles accountable when they reoffend in the community.
- Can have their case adjudicated within 21-days. In this case, if the juvenile is found guilty and sentenced to a secure residential program, there are usually no open beds and he or she is sent home for several months to await a bed. During this time, he or she reoffends and is then held again for a maximum of 21-days.

HB 7059 and SB 1670 close the loop holes in the Juvenile Justice system that allows repeat or prolific juvenile offenders to go with little to no punishment for their crimes. The bills create the designation of "Prolific Juvenile Offenders" to ensure the juveniles who have been arrested and adjudicated multiple times have their adjudicatory hearing held within 45-days after the filing of a petition of delinquency and are held in secure detention care or on active electronic monitoring until their dispositions have been entered.

In addition, the bills specify that days served by the juvenile in any type of detention care before a violation are not counted toward the 21-day and 15-day maximum detention care periods, so that the child's detention care may be continued by the court after a violation.



**Support HB 7059 by Rep. Grant & SB 1670 by Sen. Latvala**