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THE 1951 JUVENILE COURT LAW OF WYOMING

PREFACE

The Wyoming Youth Council, which was established by the Wyoming State Legislature in 1949, devoted two years to extensive research in and legislative drafts of juvenile court procedure. This project was undertaken in response to the public mandate evidenced by the large favorable vote given in 1948 to the proposed amendment to the State Constitution specifically authorizing the establishment of juvenile and domestic relations courts in the State of Wyoming. The Council's final draft was submitted to the Governor in November, 1950; introduced in the 1951 legislature; and, with several significant legislative amendments, enacted on February 17, 1951, with an effective date of May 18, 1951.

In view of the widely varying opinions of the 1951 Juvenile Court Law, it is believed that the ensuing analysis and evaluation of this controversial statute may prove helpful. Prerequisite to full understanding of this law are the following three facts:

First. A careful effort was made to secure the procedure's conformity to due process requirements, both in form and in substance.

Second. The juvenile court law is neither copied from any model law nor statute of a sister state, but was designed to meet the particular needs and problems of the State of Wyoming.

Third. The Council's only motivation for this work has been to render a public service, and its only reward will be the achievement of improved protective and rehabilitative services to juvenile dependents and delinquents.

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