

House File 591 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 591
BY ANDREWS

A BILL FOR

- 1 An Act relating to expedited contempt of court appeal proceedings
- 2 and including effective date provisions.
- 3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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1 Section 1. SHORT TITLE. This Act shall be known and may be
2 cited as the "Expedited Contempt Appeal Act".

3 Sec. 2. LEGISLATIVE INTENT. The general assembly finds that
4 individuals held in contempt of court may face immediate
5 incarceration or penalties without a timely opportunity for
6 appeal. Given that contempt of court rulings can arise from
7 minor infractions, such as accidental disruptions, an expedited
8 appeal process is necessary to ensure due process and prevent
9 potential judicial overreach. This Act establishes a mechanism
10 for prompt judicial review of contempt orders.

11 Sec. 3. NEW SECTION. **665.13 Expedited appeal process.**

12 1. A person found in contempt of court and sentenced to
13 incarceration or a fine shall have the right to file an expedited
14 appeal within four hours of the ruling.

15 2. Upon receiving a notice of appeal, the appellate court
16 shall schedule a hearing within twenty-four hours of the notice
17 to review the contempt finding and any associated penalties.

18 3. The appellate court shall have the authority to stay
19 enforcement of the contempt sentence pending appeal and to
20 overturn, modify, or affirm the ruling based on the merits of the
21 case.

22 4. The supreme court shall prescribe rules and procedures
23 to ensure the efficient handling of expedited contempt appeals,
24 including electronic filing options and emergency review panels.

25 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act, being deemed of immediate
26 importance, takes effect upon enactment.

27 EXPLANATION

28 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
29 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

30 This bill relates to contempt of court appeal proceedings.
31 The bill allows a person found in contempt of court and sentenced
32 to incarceration or a fine to file an appeal of the sentence
33 within four hours of the ruling. The bill requires the appellate
34 court to have a hearing on the sentence within 24 hours of
35 receiving the notice of appeal. The bill provides the appellate

1 court the authority to stay enforcement of the sentence and to
2 overturn, modify, or affirm the appealed sentence. The bill
3 directs the supreme court to prescribe rules and procedures to
4 enforce the bill.

5 The bill, being deemed of immediate importance, takes effect
6 upon enactment.

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