**South Carolina General Assembly**

126th Session, 2025-2026

**H. 3608**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

General Bill

Sponsors: Rep. Gatch

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Introduced in the House on January 14, 2025

Currently residing in the House Committee on **Judiciary**

Summary: Family Court

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

 Date Body Action Description with journal page number

 12/12/2024 House Prefiled

 12/12/2024 House Referred to Committee on **Judiciary**

 1/14/2025 House Introduced and read first time (House Journal‑page 262)

 1/14/2025 House Referred to Committee on **Judiciary** (House Journal‑page 262)

View the latest  [legislative information](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/billsearch.php?billnumbers=3608&session=126&summary=B)  at the website

**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[12/12/2024](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/3608_20241212.docx)

A bill

TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 63‑3‑590, RELATING TO CONDUCT OF CERTAIN FAMILY COURT HEARINGS, SO AS TO REQUIRE A JURY TRIAL IN LIMITED CIRCUMSTANCES.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Section 63‑3‑590 of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

 Section 63‑3‑590. (A) All cases of children must be dealt with as separate hearings by the court and without a jury. The hearings must be conducted in a formal manner and may be adjourned from time to time. The general public must be excluded and only persons the judge finds to have a direct interest in the case or in the work of the court may be admitted. The presence of the child in court may be waived by the court at any stage of the proceedings. Hearings may be held at any time or place within the county designated by the judge. In any case where the delinquency proceedings may result in commitment to an institution in which the child's freedom is curtailed, the privilege against self‑incrimination and the right of cross‑examination must be preserved. In all cases where required by law, the child must be accorded all rights enjoyed by adults, and where not required by law the child must be accorded adult rights consistent with the best interests of the child.

 (B) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (A), a hearing in a case involving children to decide a matter that could subject a party or witness to a term of imprisonment must be heard by a court with a jury of six jurors.

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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