



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 154

January Session, 2025

Substitute House Bill No. 6183

House of Representatives, March 20, 2025

The Committee on Children reported through REP. PARIS of the 145th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPOINTMENT OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 46a-13k of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

3 (a) There is established, within the Office of Governmental
4 Accountability established under section 1-300, an Office of the Child
5 Advocate. The [Governor] advisory committee established pursuant to
6 section 46a-13r, as amended by this act, with the approval of the General
7 Assembly, shall appoint a person with knowledge of the child welfare
8 system and the legal system to fill the Office of the Child Advocate. Such
9 person shall be qualified by training and experience to perform the
10 duties of the office as set forth in section 46a-13l. Upon any vacancy in
11 the position of Child Advocate, the advisory committee [established
12 pursuant to section 46a-13r] shall meet to consider and interview
13 successor candidates and shall, [submit to the Governor a list of not
14 fewer than three and not more than five of the most outstanding

15 candidates,] not later than sixty days after the occurrence of said
16 vacancy, [except that upon any vacancy in said position occurring after
17 January 1, 2012, but before June 15, 2012, the advisory committee shall
18 submit such list to the Governor on or before July 31, 2012. Such list shall
19 rank the candidates in the order of committee preference. Not later than
20 eight weeks after receiving the list of candidates from the advisory
21 committee, the Governor shall] designate a candidate for Child
22 Advocate from among [the choices on such list. If at any time any of the
23 candidates withdraw from consideration prior to confirmation by the
24 General Assembly, the designation shall be made from the remaining
25 candidates on the list submitted to the Governor. If, not later than eight
26 weeks after receiving the list, the Governor fails to designate a candidate
27 from the list, the candidate ranked first shall receive the designation and
28 be referred] such successor candidates and refer such candidate to the
29 General Assembly for confirmation. If the General Assembly is not in
30 session, the designated candidate shall serve as acting Child Advocate
31 and be entitled to the compensation, privileges and powers of the Child
32 Advocate until the General Assembly meets to take action on said
33 appointment. The person appointed Child Advocate shall serve for a
34 term of four years and may be reappointed or shall continue to hold
35 office until such person's successor is appointed and qualified. Upon
36 any vacancy in the position of Child Advocate and until such time as a
37 candidate has been confirmed by the General Assembly or, if the
38 General Assembly is not in session, has been designated by the
39 [Governor] advisory committee, the Associate Child Advocate shall
40 serve as the acting Child Advocate and be entitled to the compensation,
41 privileges and powers of the Child Advocate.

42 (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of the general statutes, the
43 Child Advocate shall act independently of any state department in the
44 performance of the advocate's duties.

45 (c) The Child Advocate may, within available funds, appoint such
46 staff as may be deemed necessary. [provided, for the fiscal years ending
47 June 30, 1996, and June 30, 1997, such staff shall not exceed one and one-
48 half full-time positions or the equivalent thereof.] The duties of the staff

49 may include the duties and powers of the Child Advocate if performed
50 under the direction of the Child Advocate.

51 (d) The General Assembly shall annually appropriate such sums as
52 necessary for the payment of the salaries of the staff and for the payment
53 of office expenses and other actual expenses incurred by the Child
54 Advocate in the performance of his or her duties. Any legal or court fees
55 obtained by the state in actions brought by the Child Advocate shall be
56 deposited in the General Fund.

57 (e) The Child Advocate shall annually submit, in accordance with the
58 provisions of section 11-4a, to the Governor, the joint standing
59 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
60 relating to the judiciary, children and human services and the advisory
61 committee established pursuant to section 46a-13r, as amended by this
62 act, a detailed report analyzing the work of the Office of the Child
63 Advocate.

64 Sec. 2. Section 46a-13r of the general statutes is repealed and the
65 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

66 (a) There is established an advisory committee to the Office of the
67 Child Advocate established under section 46a-13k, as amended by this
68 act. Said committee shall, [prepare and submit to the Governor a list of
69 candidates for appointment of] with the approval of the General
70 Assembly, appoint the Child Advocate. The advisory committee shall
71 consist of seven members as follows: (1) One appointed by the president
72 pro tempore of the Senate; (2) one appointed by the speaker of the House
73 of Representatives; (3) one appointed by the majority leader of the
74 Senate; (4) one appointed by the majority leader of the House of
75 Representatives; (5) one appointed by the minority leader of the Senate;
76 (6) one appointed by the minority leader of the House of
77 Representatives; and (7) one appointed by the Governor. The committee
78 shall select a chairperson who shall preside at meetings of the
79 committee. No member of the advisory committee shall be a person who
80 is a volunteer for, a board member of, or is employed by, any entity or
81 agency subject to the review of, or evaluation or monitoring by the Child

82 Advocate pursuant to section 46a-13l, or is a communicator lobbyist
83 who pursuant to such lobbyist's registration under chapter 10, lobbies
84 on behalf of any entity or agency subject to the review of, or evaluation
85 or monitoring by the Child Advocate pursuant to said section 46a-13l.
86 Each member of the advisory committee shall serve a term of five years
87 and may be reappointed at the conclusion of such term. [All initial
88 appointments to the advisory committee shall be made not later than
89 September 1, 2011.] Each member of the advisory committee shall serve
90 a five-year term from July first of the year of their appointment. Any
91 vacancy in the membership of the committee shall be filled by the
92 appointing authority for the unexpired portion of the term.

93 (b) The advisory committee shall meet at least three times each year
94 with the Child Advocate, and the Child Advocate's staff, for the
95 purposes described in subdivision (13) of subsection (a) of section 46a-
96 13l.

97 (c) The advisory committee shall provide for an annual evaluation of
98 the effectiveness of the Office of the Child Advocate.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
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Section 1	July 1, 2025	46a-13k
Sec. 2	July 1, 2025	46a-13r

KID *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill transfers the authority to appoint the Child Advocate from the Office of the Governor to the Office of the Child Advocate advisory committee subject to the approval of the General Assembly, resulting in no fiscal impact to the state.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 6183*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPOINTMENT OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE.*****SUMMARY**

This bill transfers, from the governor to the Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) advisory committee, the authority to appoint the child advocate. As under existing law, the appointed nominee is then subject to approval by the General Assembly.

In current law, following a vacancy in the Child Advocate position, OCA's advisory committee gives the governor a list of three to five candidates from which to choose.

Under existing law, if the General Assembly is not in session, the designated candidate serves as acting child advocate until the General Assembly meets to vote on the appointment.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

BACKGROUND***OCA Advisory Committee***

By law, OCA's advisory committee consists of seven members appointed by the governor, Senate president pro tempore, House speaker, and House and Senate majority and minority leaders. Each committee member serves a five-year term, at which point, they can be reappointed. Responsibilities of the advisory committee currently include providing an annual evaluation of OCA's effectiveness.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 16 Nay 1 (03/06/2025)