



House of Representatives

File No. 928

General Assembly

January Session, 2025

(Reprint of File No. 154)

Substitute House Bill No. 6183
As Amended by House Amendment
Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner
May 16, 2025

**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 Section 46a-13k of the general statutes is repealed and the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) (1) There is established, within the Office of Governmental
4 Accountability established under section 1-300, an Office of the Child
5 Advocate. The Governor, with the approval of the General Assembly,
6 shall appoint a person with knowledge of the child welfare system and
7 the legal system to fill the Office of the Child Advocate. Such person
8 shall be qualified by training and experience to perform the duties of the
9 office as set forth in section 46a-13l.

10 (2) Upon any vacancy in the position of Child Advocate, the advisory
11 committee established pursuant to section 46a-13r, as amended by this
12 act, shall meet to consider and interview successor candidates and shall

13 submit to the Governor a list of not fewer than three and not more than
14 five of the most outstanding candidates, not later than sixty days after
15 the occurrence of said vacancy. [, except that upon any vacancy in said
16 position occurring after January 1, 2012, but before June 15, 2012, the
17 advisory committee shall submit such list to the Governor on or before
18 July 31, 2012.] Such list shall rank the candidates in the order of
19 committee preference. Not later than eight weeks after receiving the list
20 of candidates from the advisory committee, the Governor shall
21 designate a candidate for Child Advocate from among the choices on
22 such list. If at any time any of the candidates withdraw from
23 consideration prior to confirmation by the General Assembly, the
24 designation shall be made from the remaining candidates on the list
25 submitted to the Governor. If, not later than eight weeks after receiving
26 the list, the Governor fails to designate a candidate from the list, the
27 candidate ranked first shall receive the designation and be referred to
28 the General Assembly for confirmation. If the General Assembly is not
29 in session, the designated candidate shall serve as acting Child
30 Advocate and be entitled to the compensation, privileges and powers of
31 the Child Advocate until the General Assembly meets to take action on
32 said appointment.

33 (3) The person appointed Child Advocate shall serve for a term of
34 [four] five years and may be reappointed in accordance with the
35 provisions of subdivision (4) of this subsection or shall continue to hold
36 office until such person's successor is appointed and qualified. Upon
37 any vacancy in the position of Child Advocate and until such time as a
38 candidate has been confirmed by the General Assembly or, if the
39 General Assembly is not in session, has been designated by the
40 Governor, the Associate Child Advocate shall serve as the acting Child
41 Advocate and be entitled to the compensation, privileges and powers of
42 the Child Advocate.

43 (4) (A) Not later than twelve months prior to the expiration of the
44 term of the Child Advocate, the advisory committee shall submit a
45 preliminary report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a,
46 to the Governor, the Child Advocate and the joint standing committees

47 of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the
48 judiciary, children and human services, evaluating the work of the Child
49 Advocate during the Child Advocate's tenure.

50 (B) Not later than six months prior to the expiration of the term of the
51 Child Advocate, the advisory committee shall submit a final report, in
52 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, to the Governor, the
53 Child Advocate and the joint standing committees of the General
54 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary,
55 children and human services, evaluating the work of the Child
56 Advocate during the Child Advocate's tenure and recommending the
57 reappointment of the Child Advocate or the appointment of a new Child
58 Advocate.

59 (C) Not later than ninety days after the submission of the final report
60 pursuant to subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, the Governor shall
61 notify the advisory committee of the Governor's acceptance or rejection
62 of the advisory committee's recommendation. If the Governor does not
63 provide such notice, the advisory committee's recommendation shall be
64 deemed accepted. If the Governor (i) elects to reappoint the Child
65 Advocate or a recommendation to reappoint the Child Advocate is
66 deemed accepted pursuant to this subparagraph, the Child Advocate
67 shall be referred to the General Assembly for confirmation, or (ii) does
68 not elect to reappoint the Child Advocate or a recommendation to not
69 reappoint the Child Advocate is deemed accepted pursuant to this
70 subparagraph, a new Child Advocate shall be appointed in accordance
71 with the provisions of subdivision (2) of this subsection.

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

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

79 may include the duties and powers of the Child Advocate if performed
80 under the direction of the Child Advocate.

81 (d) The General Assembly shall annually appropriate such sums as
82 necessary for the payment of the salaries of the staff and for the payment
83 of office expenses and other actual expenses incurred by the Child
84 Advocate in the performance of his or her duties. Any legal or court fees
85 obtained by the state in actions brought by the Child Advocate shall be
86 deposited in the General Fund.

87 (e) The Child Advocate shall annually submit, in accordance with the
88 provisions of section 11-4a, to the Governor, the joint standing
89 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
90 relating to the judiciary, children and human services and the advisory
91 committee established pursuant to section 46a-13r, as amended by this
92 act, a detailed report analyzing the work of the Office of the Child
93 Advocate.

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

96 (a) There is established an advisory committee to the Office of the
97 Child Advocate established under section 46a-13k, as amended by this
98 act. Said committee shall prepare and submit to the Governor a list of
99 candidates for appointment of the Child Advocate. The advisory
100 committee shall consist of seven members as follows: (1) One appointed
101 by the president pro tempore of the Senate; (2) one appointed by the
102 speaker of the House of Representatives; (3) one appointed by the
103 majority leader of the Senate; (4) one appointed by the majority leader
104 of the House of Representatives; (5) one appointed by the minority
105 leader of the Senate; (6) one appointed by the minority leader of the
106 House of Representatives; and (7) one appointed by the Governor. The
107 committee shall select a chairperson who shall preside at meetings of
108 the committee. No member of the advisory committee shall be a person
109 who is a volunteer for, a board member of, or is employed by, any entity
110 or agency subject to the review of, or evaluation or monitoring by the

111 Child Advocate pursuant to section 46a-13l, or is a communicator
112 lobbyist who pursuant to such lobbyist's registration under chapter 10,
113 lobbies on behalf of any entity or agency subject to the review of, or
114 evaluation or monitoring by the Child Advocate pursuant to said
115 section 46a-13l. Each member of the advisory committee shall serve a
116 term of five years and may be reappointed at the conclusion of such
117 term. All initial appointments to the advisory committee shall be made
118 not later than September 1, 2011. Each member of the advisory
119 committee shall serve a five-year term from July first of the year of their
120 appointment. Any vacancy in the membership of the committee shall be
121 filled by the appointing authority for the unexpired portion of the term.

122 (b) The advisory committee shall meet at least three times each year
123 with the Child Advocate, and the Child Advocate's staff, for the
124 purposes described in subdivision (13) of subsection (a) of section 46a-
125 13l.

126 (c) The advisory committee shall provide for an annual evaluation of
127 the effectiveness of the Office of the Child Advocate. Such evaluation
128 shall be submitted, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a,
129 to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
130 cognizance of the judiciary, children and human services and the
131 Governor and published on the Internet web site of the Child Advocate.

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

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 makes a variety of adjustments to the existing appointing process for the Office of the Child Advocate (OCA), including creating several required reports on the efficacy of the Child Advocate resulting in no fiscal impact to the state.

House "A" strikes the underlying bill and results in the fiscal impact described above.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 6183 (as amended by House "A")*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPOINTMENT OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE.****SUMMARY**

This bill makes various changes related to the Office of the Child Advocate (OCA), including:

1. extending the child advocate's term length from four to five years,
2. establishing a specified reappointment process for the child advocate that generally requires OCA's advisory committee (see BACKGROUND) to evaluate the advocate's performance and recommend whether he or she should be reappointed, and
3. requiring the advisory committee to (a) submit its annual evaluation on the child advocate's effectiveness, which it must complete under existing law, to the governor and the Judiciary, Children's, and Human Services committees and (b) post it on OCA's website.

The bill also makes minor, technical, and conforming changes.

*House Amendment "A" removes a provision transferring the authority to appoint the child advocate from the governor to OCA's advisory committee and replaces it with the provisions described above.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

CHILD ADVOCATE REAPPOINTMENT PROCESS

Existing law allows the child advocate to be reappointed at his or her

term's conclusion. The bill establishes a specified reappointment process. Under the bill, no less than 12 months before the advocate's term ends, OCA's advisory committee must submit a preliminary report evaluating the advocate's performance. Additionally, no less than six months before the advocate's term ends, the committee must submit a final report once again evaluating his or her performance and recommending reappointment or appointment of a new advocate.

The bill requires the advisory committee to give these reports to the governor, the child advocate, and the Judiciary, Children's, and Human Services committees. Within 90 days after receiving the final report, the governor must accept or reject the committee's recommendation. If he does not do so, the committee's recommendation is deemed accepted.

If the governor reappoints the child advocate (or the reappointment recommendation is deemed accepted), the advocate is sent to the General Assembly for confirmation. If the governor does not reappoint (or the recommendation not to reappoint is deemed accepted), a new child advocate is appointed based on existing law's appointment and confirmation procedure (see BACKGROUND).

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.

Child Advocate Appointment and Confirmation

Under existing law, following a vacancy in the child advocate position, OCA's advisory committee gives the governor a ranked list of three to five candidates from which to choose. If the governor does not make a selection, the candidate ranked first is automatically designated.

The designated candidate is then referred to the General Assembly for confirmation. 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.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 16 Nay 1 (03/06/2025)