

Committee on Children JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6183

Title: AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPOINTMENT OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE.

Vote Date: 3/6/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/13/2025

File No.:

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CO-SPONSORS OF BILL:

Rep. Mary Welander, 114th Dist.

SPONSORS OF BILL:

Committee on Children

REASONS FOR BILL:

The intent of HB 6183 is to change the appointment process of the head of the Connecticut Office of the Child Advocate, to an appointment selected and approved by the OCA Advisory Committee.

S Language removes the Governor from the appointment process and grants full appointment power to the advisory committee, subject the approval of the state legislature.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Office of the Child Advocate Advisory Committee, Co-Chair, Shelley Geballe, JD, MPH](#)

[Office of the Child Advocate Advisory Committee, Edwin Colon, JD](#)

[Office of the Child Advocate Advisory Committee, Danielle Cooper, PhD](#)

[Office of the Child Advocate Advisory Committee, Jeanne Milstein, BS](#)

[Office of the Child Advocate Advisory Committee, Terry Nowakowski, LCSW](#)

[Office of the Child Advocate Advisory Committee, Zakkyya Williams, MA](#) supports this bill because unlike other state government accountability offices, OCA's Advisory Committee does not appoint (or

re-appoint) the head of the OCA and they state that the proposed change outlined in Committee Bill 6183 will ensure that the appointment process for the Child Advocate is nonpartisan, transparent and free from undue influence, thereby enhancing the independence of OCA. They state the bill will ensure that the Child Advocate's appointment will be based solely on merit and expertise in child welfare and legal systems, not political factors.

[Dr. Linda Dalessio](#) supports this bill.

[Connecticut Voices for Children, Executive Director, Emily Byrne, MPA](#)

[Connecticut Voices for Children, Research-Policy Director, Emily Knox, Ph.D.](#), supports bill 6183 because it changes the appointing authority of the OCA, from the Governor, to the OCA advisory committee, who are experts in child welfare and law, and are appointed both by the Governor and by Connecticut State Legislature Majority and Minority leadership. They state that this bill would protect the OCA from partisanship to the detriment of the needed work required by law by giving the advisory committee appointing authority.

[Center for Children's Advocacy, Executive Director, Sarah Healy Eagan JD](#), supports the bill, because they say it will ensure a structurally independent process for appointment of the Child Advocate consistent with the responsibilities of the OCA for executive branch oversight. They also note that the OCA Advisory Committee, a bi-partisan appointed body, unanimously recommended this structural change in its 2024 Annual Report to the Legislature.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Alex Sferrazza

Date: 3/12/25