



Talking Points for SB 222

Guardian ad Litem Direct-Support Organization

BACKGROUND:

- The GAL Program represents abused, abandoned, and neglected children in dependency proceedings.
- In 2007, the Legislature authorized the Program to create a direct-support organization (“DSO”), which is the Guardian ad Litem Foundation.
- The statute allowing GAL to have a DSO has an automatic repeal provision, so if the Legislature does not act, the ability to have a DSO will expire on October 1, 2018.
- The DSO is an important partner for GAL in furthering its mission because it does things like generate public awareness of the GAL Program and the children the Program represents, gives the Program a way to accept grants and donations from private individuals and organizations, and provides support to meet the needs of children represented by the Program.

WHAT THE BILL DOES:

SB 222 deletes the automatic repeal provision in section 39.8298 which will enable the Foundation to continue its work.

WHY THE BILL IS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF CHILDREN:

Having a DSO is crucial to the Program’s ability to maximize resources for advocacy of abused, abandoned, and neglected children and to assist with recruitment and retention of the over 10,000 volunteers who are part of the GAL advocacy team.

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