

HB 1570 -- GUARDIANS AD LITEM

SPONSOR: Franz

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass by consent" by the Special Committee on Family Services by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill adds the services of guardians ad litem to the priority list when a family court is determining how to spend moneys in the county family services and justice fund for families receiving dispute resolution services.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2009, FY 2010, and FY 2011.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill will allow moneys in an existing county fund to be used for guardian ad litem services. No additional court costs will be created. The counties are required to appoint a guardian ad litem in abuse and neglect cases for children, but there is little help to cover the costs. If the parents are poor or indigent, the cost of those services often falls back on the county creating a real strain on county budgets and causing difficulty when projecting adequate funding. Adding the guardian ad litem services as an approved reimbursement will be in the best interests of children.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Franz; and Honorable David P. Evans, 37th Judicial Circuit.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.