

HB 3451 -- RECORDINGS OF INTERVIEWS REGARDING CHILD ABUSE OR  
NEGLECT

SPONSOR: Seitz

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on  
Children and Families by a vote of 11 to 0.

This bill requires any face-to-face interview for the purposes of  
an assessment of alleged child abuse or neglect by the Department  
of Social Services be recorded either by audio or video. All  
recordings must be securely stored and only software or  
applications approved by the Department will be used to generate  
the recordings.

A person who is charged with alleged child abuse or neglect will  
be unable to sustain a motion or have standing objecting to any  
failure by the Department to comply with the requirements of this  
bill. Failure by the Department to comply cannot be the sole  
grounds to preclude statements made by a child during the  
interview that would be otherwise admissible in a criminal or  
civil proceeding.

Any recording must be retained and stored for no less than five  
years. Copies of any recordings can be issued only to those  
investigating an allegation or prosecuting an offense relating to  
an allegation, or upon request by a caregiver or guardian unless  
the court orders otherwise.

PROponents: Supporters say that these interviews gather  
comprehensive information dealing with abuse. Not all  
interviewers have the same skill, expertise, or experience. This  
would preserve evidence and reduce trauma for the child.  
Recordings can be done easily with today's technology and there  
is no excuse to not do this.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Seitz;  
Street Grace; and Arnie Dienoff.

OPponents: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full  
written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found  
under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.