



SR0648

LRB104 21063 ECR 35100 r

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Guardians ad Litem (GALs) serve a vital role in Illinois courts by representing the best interests of children in family law and juvenile proceedings, frequently making recommendations that significantly affect a child's health, safety, welfare, stability, and long-term future; and

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WHEREAS, A well-trained GAL serves as the impartial eyes and ears of the court by conducting thorough and independent investigations, interviewing children and relevant parties, reviewing pertinent records, and providing objective recommendations free from parental bias or conflict, thereby assisting the court in prioritizing the needs of the child over the competing interests of adults involved in disputes concerning allocation of parental responsibilities, parenting time, abuse, neglect, and other matters affecting child welfare; and

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WHEREAS, Matters involving children's medical needs, including chronic medical conditions and treatment compliance, require careful evaluation and a clear understanding of the distinction between legitimate medical advocacy and parental conflict that may be framed as a medical concern; and

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WHEREAS, Appropriate training is essential to ensure that

1 GALs are equipped to consult appropriately with treating
2 medical professionals, understand treatment adherence and
3 associated risks, recognize the ethical boundaries governing
4 the expression of medical opinions, and avoid incomplete or
5 biased assessments that may adversely affect a child; and

6 WHEREAS, Consistent, high-quality training for GALs
7 promotes more informed recommendations, strengthens judicial
8 decision-making, and enhances outcomes for children and
9 families throughout Illinois; and

10 WHEREAS, The Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts,
11 through the Illinois Judicial College, is the primary entity
12 responsible for providing continuing legal education and
13 professional development for judges, court personnel, and
14 attorneys practicing before Illinois courts, including GALs;
15 therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL
17 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we encourage the
18 Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, acting through
19 the Illinois Judicial College, to develop, approve, and offer
20 a continuing legal education program for GALs serving in
21 family law and juvenile matters that includes, at a minimum:

22 (1) Instruction regarding chronic medical conditions
23 affecting children;

1 (2) Training addressing the distinction between
2 medical advocacy and parental conflict;

3 (3) Guidance on appropriate consultation with treating
4 medical professionals;

5 (4) Education concerning treatment adherence and risk
6 assessment; and

7 (5) Instruction regarding the ethical limits of a
8 GAL's medical opinions; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That we encourage the Administrative Office of
10 the Illinois Courts to promote participation in such training
11 to GALs statewide and to communicate this recommendation to
12 the Chief Judge of each judicial circuit for consideration in
13 appointment and continued service determinations; and be it
14 further

15 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
16 delivered to the Director of the Administrative Office of the
17 Illinois Courts and the Director of the Illinois Judicial
18 College.