



General Assembly

January Session, 2001

Committee Bill No. 909

LCO No. 4410

Referred to Committee on Select Committee on Children

Introduced by:
(KID)

AN ACT REQUIRING THE REVIEW OF ALL FIREARM-RELATED DEATHS OF CHILDREN IN THE STATE.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 46a-13l of the general statutes is repealed and the following
2 is substituted in lieu thereof:

3 (a) The Child Advocate shall:

4 (1) Evaluate the delivery of services to children by state agencies
5 and those entities that provide services to children through funds
6 provided by the state;

7 (2) Review periodically the procedures established by any state
8 agency providing services to children to carry out the provisions of
9 sections 46a-13k to 46a-13q, inclusive, with a view toward the rights of
10 the children and recommend revisions to such procedures;

11 (3) Review complaints of persons concerning the actions of any state
12 or municipal agency providing services to children and of any entity
13 that provides services to children through funds provided by the state,
14 make appropriate referrals and investigate those where the Child

15 Advocate determines that a child or family may be in need of
16 assistance from the Child Advocate or that a systemic issue in the
17 state's provision of services to children is raised by the complaint;

18 (4) Pursuant to an investigation, provide assistance to a child or
19 family who the Child Advocate determines is in need of such
20 assistance including, but not limited to, advocating with an agency,
21 provider or others on behalf of the best interests of the child;

22 (5) Periodically review the facilities and procedures of any and all
23 institutions or residences, public or private, where a juvenile has been
24 placed by any agency or department;

25 (6) Recommend changes in state policies concerning children
26 including, but not limited to, changes in the system of providing
27 juvenile justice, child care, foster care and treatment;

28 (7) Take all possible action including, but not limited to, conducting
29 programs of public education, undertaking legislative advocacy and
30 making proposals for systemic reform and formal legal action, in order
31 to secure and ensure the legal, civil and special rights of children who
32 reside in this state;

33 (8) Provide training and technical assistance to attorneys
34 representing children and guardians ad litem appointed by the
35 Superior Court;

36 (9) Periodically review the number of special needs children in any
37 foster care or permanent care facility and recommend changes in the
38 policies and procedures for the placement of such children;

39 (10) Serve or designate a person to serve as a member of the child
40 fatality review panel established in subsection (b) of this section; and

41 (11) Take appropriate steps to advise the public of the services of the
42 Office of the Child Advocate, the purpose of the office and procedures
43 to contact the office.

44 (b) There is established a child fatality review panel composed of
45 seven permanent members as follows: A pediatrician, appointed by
46 the Governor; a representative of law enforcement, appointed by the
47 president pro tempore of the Senate; the Child Advocate, or a
48 designee; a public child welfare practitioner, appointed by the
49 minority leader of the Senate; a representative of a community service
50 group, appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives; a
51 medical examiner, appointed by the minority leader of the House of
52 Representatives; and the Chief State's Attorney, or a designee. A
53 majority of the panel may select not more than two additional
54 temporary members with particular expertise or interest to serve on
55 the review of a specific fatality. Such temporary members shall have
56 the same duties and powers as the permanent members of the panel.
57 The chairperson shall be elected from among the panel's permanent
58 members. The panel shall, to the greatest extent possible, reflect the
59 ethnic, cultural and geographic diversity of the state.

60 (c) The panel shall review the circumstances of the death of a child
61 placed in out-of-home care or whose death was due to unexpected or
62 unexplained causes, including, but not limited to, death involving the
63 use of a firearm, to facilitate development of prevention strategies to
64 address identified trends and patterns of risk and to improve
65 coordination of services for children and families in the state. Members
66 of the panel shall not be compensated for their services, but may be
67 reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of
68 their duties.

69 (d) On or before January 1, 2000, and annually thereafter, the panel
70 shall issue an annual report [which shall include] that includes its
71 findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General
72 Assembly on its review of child fatalities for the preceding year. The
73 annual report shall include a separate section concerning child
74 fatalities involving the use of firearms. The panel shall deliver the
75 firearms fatalities section to the joint standing committees of the
76 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to human

