



General Assembly

Amendment

February Session, 2016

LCO No. 4320



Offered by:
SEN. FASANO, 34th Dist.

To: Senate Bill No. 72

File No. 26

Cal. No. 70

**"AN ACT CONCERNING A NOTIFICATION OF SUPPORT FOR
FOSTER PARENTS AND RELATIVE CAREGIVERS."**

1 After the last section, add the following and renumber sections and
2 internal references accordingly:

3 "Sec. 501. Section 46a-13l of the general statutes is repealed and the
4 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2016*):

5 (a) The Child Advocate shall:

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

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

13 (3) Review complaints of persons concerning the actions of any state

14 or municipal agency providing services to children and of any entity
15 that provides services to children through funds provided by the state,
16 make appropriate referrals and investigate those where the Child
17 Advocate determines that a child or family may be in need of
18 assistance from the Child Advocate or that a systemic issue in the
19 state's provision of services to children is raised by the complaint;

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

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

27 (6) Recommend changes in state policies concerning children
28 including changes in the system of providing juvenile justice, child
29 care, foster care and treatment;

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

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

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

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

43 (11) Take appropriate steps to advise the public of the services of the

44 Office of the Child Advocate, the purpose of the office and procedures
45 to contact the office.

46 (b) There is established a child fatality review panel composed of
47 thirteen permanent members as follows: The Child Advocate, or a
48 designee; the Commissioners of Children and Families, Public Health
49 and Public Safety, or their designees; the Chief Medical Examiner, or a
50 designee; the Chief State's Attorney, or a designee; a pediatrician,
51 appointed by the Governor; a representative of law enforcement,
52 appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate; an attorney,
53 appointed by the majority leader of the Senate; a social work
54 professional, appointed by the minority leader of the Senate; a
55 representative of a community service group appointed by the speaker
56 of the House of Representatives; a psychologist, appointed by the
57 majority leader of the House of Representatives; and an injury
58 prevention representative, appointed by the minority leader of the
59 House of Representatives. A majority of the panel may select not more
60 than three additional temporary members with particular expertise or
61 interest to serve on the panel. Such temporary members shall have the
62 same duties and powers as the permanent members of the panel. The
63 chairperson shall be elected from among the panel's permanent
64 members. The panel shall, to the greatest extent possible, reflect the
65 ethnic, cultural and geographic diversity of the state.

66 (c) The panel shall review the circumstances of the death of a child
67 placed in out-of-home care or whose death was due to unexpected or
68 unexplained causes to facilitate development of prevention strategies
69 to address identified trends and patterns of risk and to improve
70 coordination of services for children and families in the state. Members
71 of the panel shall not be compensated for their services, but may be
72 reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of
73 their duties.

74 (d) On or before January 1, 2000, and annually thereafter, the panel
75 shall issue an annual report which shall include its findings and
76 recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on its

77 review of child fatalities for the preceding year.

78 (e) Upon request of two-thirds of the members of the panel and
79 within available appropriations, the Governor, the General Assembly
80 or at the Child Advocate's discretion, the Child Advocate shall conduct
81 an in-depth investigation and review and issue a report with
82 recommendations on the death or critical incident of a child. The
83 report shall be submitted to the Governor, the General Assembly and
84 the commissioner of any state agency cited in the report and shall be
85 made available to the general public.

86 (f) (1) Upon the death of a child whose death was due to unexpected
87 or unexplained causes and who had any past or present involvement
88 with the Department of Children and Families, the Child Advocate
89 shall conduct an assessment of the department's internal processes,
90 including an assessment of any department staff members who
91 participated in the child's care.

92 (2) Any state agency cited in a report issued by the Office of the
93 Child Advocate, pursuant to the Child Advocate's responsibilities
94 under this section, shall submit a written response to the report and
95 recommendations made in the report to the Governor and the General
96 Assembly not later than ninety days after receipt of such report and
97 recommendations. The General Assembly shall submit a copy of such
98 response to the Office of the Child Advocate immediately upon
99 receipt.

100 (g) The Chief Medical Examiner shall provide timely notice to the
101 Child Advocate and to the chairperson of the child fatality review
102 panel of the death of any child that is to be investigated pursuant to
103 section 19a-406.

104 (h) Any agency having responsibility for the custody or care of
105 children shall provide timely notice to the Child Advocate and the
106 chairperson of the child fatality review panel of the death of a child or
107 a critical incident involving a child in its custody or care.

108 Sec. 502. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) Not later than January 1,
 109 2017, and annually thereafter, the Child Advocate shall submit a
 110 report, in accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the
 111 joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance
 112 of matters relating to children and the judiciary. Such report shall
 113 explore the number and circumstances of preventable child deaths in
 114 the state within the previous year.

115 (b) Not later than four weeks after submitting the report described
 116 in subsection (a) of this section, and annually thereafter, the Office of
 117 the Child Advocate, in coordination with the Department of Children
 118 and Families and the joint standing committees of the General
 119 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children and the
 120 judiciary, shall conduct a joint public hearing to discuss the report
 121 submitted pursuant to subsection (a) of this section."

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Sec. 501	<i>October 1, 2016</i>	<i>46a-13l</i>
Sec. 502	<i>from passage</i>	New section