



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 715**

January Session, 2017

Substitute House Bill No. 6999

*House of Representatives, May 3, 2017*

The Committee on Judiciary reported through REP. TONG of the 147th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE USE OF THERAPY DOGS TO COMFORT CHILDREN TESTIFYING IN CERTAIN CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS.***

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2017*) The Judicial Branch shall  
2 maintain on its Internet web site a section providing information  
3 regarding the availability of an accommodation, granted at the court's  
4 discretion, for the presence of a dog to provide comfort and support  
5 for a child under the age of eighteen during such child's testimony in  
6 the criminal prosecution of an offense involving the alleged assault,  
7 abuse or sexual abuse of such child. Said web site shall also provide  
8 contact information for organizations that provide, free of charge, the  
9 use of a dog trained to comfort individuals who have experienced  
10 mental, physical or emotional trauma or witnessed or been victims of  
11 assault, abuse or sexual abuse.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2017</i>	New section

**JUD**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

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***OFA Fiscal Note******State Impact:*** None***Municipal Impact:*** None***Explanation***

The bill requires the Judicial Department to maintain information on the agency website and does not result in a fiscal impact to the state or municipalities.

***The Out Years******State Impact:*** None***Municipal Impact:*** None

**OLR Bill Analysis****sHB 6999*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE USE OF THERAPY DOGS TO COMFORT CHILDREN TESTIFYING IN CERTAIN CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS.*****SUMMARY**

This bill requires the Judicial Branch to maintain on its website information about the availability of an accommodation, allowed at the court's discretion, for a dog to provide comfort and support to a child under age 18 during his or her testimony in a criminal prosecution involving alleged assault, abuse, or sexual abuse of the child. The website must also provide contact information for organizations that provide, at no cost, the use of a dog trained to comfort individuals who have (1) experienced mental, physical, or emotional trauma or (2) witnessed or been victims of assault, abuse, or sexual abuse.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2017

**BACKGROUND*****Legislative History***

The House referred the bill (File 72) to the Judiciary Committee, which reported a substitute that eliminated a requirement for the chief court administrator, within available appropriations, to provide Superior Court judges with training on the benefits of animal-assisted therapy.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 13 Nay 0 (03/02/2017)

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 41 Nay 0 (04/25/2017)