

By: Representative Fondren

To: Judiciary A

HOUSE BILL NO. 1485

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE "CASA CAPACITY GROWTH PROGRAM" WITHIN
2 THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF COURTS; TO PROVIDE FOR THE PURPOSE OF
3 THE PROGRAM; TO PROVIDE FOR ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR CASA
4 PROGRAMS TO RECEIVE FUNDS; TO PROVIDE FOR FUND DISTRIBUTION; TO
5 AUTHORIZE THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF COURTS TO CONDUCT
6 OVERSIGHT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

8 **SECTION 1.** This act shall be known and may be cited as the
9 "CASA Capacity Growth Program Act."

10 **SECTION 2.** (1) There is hereby created within the
11 Administrative Office of Courts, hereinafter referred to as
12 "AOC", the "CASA Capacity Growth Program", hereinafter referred to
13 as "the Program". The purpose of the Program is to provide
14 financial support to Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
15 programs in Mississippi to enhance their capacity to serve abused
16 and neglected children through a pass-through funding mechanism.

17 (2) The AOC shall administer the pass-through funding for
18 the Program and shall be responsible for:

19 (a) Distributing funds to eligible CASA programs as
20 provided in Section 4 of this act; and

21 (b) Monitoring the use of funds for compliance with
22 applicable laws and regulations.

23 (3) The AOC may enter into an agreement with CASA
24 Mississippi or another qualified entity to manage the distribution
25 of funds and provide administrative support for the program. Such
26 agreement may include a reasonable percentage of funds to cover
27 administrative costs.

28 **SECTION 3.** To be eligible to receive funds under the
29 Program, a CASA program must be a member in good standing with the
30 National CASA/GAL Association.

31 **SECTION 4.** (1) Funds shall be distributed by the
32 Administrative Office of Courts (AOC) to eligible CASA programs
33 based on a formula that considers the following factors, but not
34 limited to such factors, as follows:

35 (a) The number of children in custody in the program
36 area; and

37 (b) The number of children served by the program; and
38 (c) The number of volunteers actively serving with the
39 program.



45 hours, and other fundraising efforts. This demonstration of local
46 support shall be reported to the AOC annually.

47 **SECTION 5.** The AOC is authorized to promulgate rules and
48 regulations necessary for the implementation of this act,
49 including, but not limited to:

50 (a) Establishing reporting requirements for grant
51 recipients; and

52 (b) Establishing procedures for the disbursement of
53 funds.

54 **SECTION 6.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
55 and after July 1, 2025.

