



Ohio Judicial Conference

The Voice of Ohio Judges

**House Criminal Justice Committee
Judge Randall D. Fuller
Proponent Testimony on House Bill 122
May 2, 2023**

Chair Abrams, Vice Chair Williams, Ranking Member Brown, and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee, I thank you for this opportunity to submit proponent testimony for House Bill 122 on behalf of the Ohio Judicial Conference.

I am Judge Randall Fuller. I was elected to serve as the first Judge of the Common Pleas Court of Delaware County, Domestic Relations Division in 2016. Prior to taking the bench, I practiced law in downtown Delaware for 21 years. I currently serve as the President-Elect of the Ohio Association of Domestic Relations Judges and as Immediate Past President of the Ohio Chapter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC). I am a member of the Ohio Judicial Conference's Domestic Relations Law and Procedure Committee, Legislative Committee, Court Technology Committee and a member of the Judicial Advisory Group. I am also a member of the National Council for Juvenile and Family Court Judges and a member of the American Judges Association.

Domestic relations and juvenile judges appoint guardians ad litem (GALs) and court-appointed special advocates (CASAs) to assist the court in determining the best interest of a child involved in a family law dispute. A GAL or CASA meets with both parents and, usually, goes into their home to observe the parents' interaction with the child. Many courts have reported harassment or intimidation of an appointed GAL or CASA. Occasionally, due to harassment or intimidation, a GAL or CASA requests removal from a specific case, or in extreme circumstances, removal from a court's list of GALs or CASAs accepting cases. I have experienced this situation in Delaware County. The OJC supports H.B. 122 and its goal of providing protection to court-appointed child advocates and the recognition of the essential and difficult role a GAL or CASA plays in domestic relations and juvenile courts.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of H.B. 122. We ask that you pass this important bill for Ohio's family law courts. We thank the sponsors, Representative Pavliga and Representative Miller, for carrying this legislation. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.