

NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill 25 Guardian Ad Litem Attorneys Guardian Ad Litem Attorneys

SHORT TITLE: Guardian Ad Litem Attorneys

SPONSOR(S): Senator Allen Wellons

FISCAL IMPACT

	Yes (X)	No ()	No Estimate Available ()		
	<u>FY 2000-01</u>	<u>FY 2001-02</u>	<u>FY 2002-03</u>	<u>FY 2003-04</u>	<u>FY 2004-05</u>
Guardian Ad Litem Attorney Expenses	\$100,000	\$105,000	\$110,250	\$115,763	\$121,551

* 5% increase in expenditures has been added each year due to the anticipated increase in the number of total proceedings

PRINCIPAL DEPARTMENT(S) & PROGRAM(S) AFFECTED: Judicial Department, Guardian ad Litem Program

EFFECTIVE DATE: When it becomes law.

BILL SUMMARY: This act would provide that an attorney be present at step of the proceeding when a non attorney is appointed as a guardian ad litem in a case rather than just through the dispositional phase of the case.

ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODOLOGY:

The Fiscal Research Division believes this legislation would have a moderate fiscal impact on Guardian ad Litem (GAL) attorney expenditures. In FY 1997-98 approximately 2,146 of 22,378 total proceedings (9.6%) occurred without an attorney present. This bill would require that an attorney be present at all of these proceedings in order to assist non-attorney GAL volunteers. Currently, the GAL Program spends about \$1,000,000 each year to provide representation for these proceedings. Thus, it is estimated that these other proceedings that didn't have attorneys present previously, would require an additional \$100,000 in attorney expenses each year, if the legislation is enacted. It is anticipated that the additional \$400,000 in recurring funds appropriated in the 1999 budget for GAL attorneys would be sufficient to cover these additional expense

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS: None.

FISCAL RESEARCH DIVISION 733-4910

PREPARED BY: Charles Perusse

APPROVED BY: Tom Covington

DATE:

Thursday, July 08, 1999



Signed Copy Located in the NCGA Principal Clerk's Offices