

1 **Child Welfare Parental Representation Program Amendments**

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Wayne A. Harper

House Sponsor:

2 **LONG TITLE**

3 **General Description:**

4 This bill addresses the Child Welfare Parental Representation Program.

5 **Highlighted Provisions:**

6 This bill:

- 7
- 8 ▶ allows the Child Welfare Parental Representation Program to:
 - 9 • provide education and support for all parental representation attorneys;
 - 10 • support indigent parental defense services through grants; and
 - 11 • administer the existing Interdisciplinary Parental Representation Program;
 - 12 ▶ removes the requirement for attorneys to be contracted; and
 - 13 ▶ modifies the way the executive director shall prepare the budget.

14 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

15 None

16 **Other Special Clauses:**

17 None

18 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

19 AMENDS:

20 **78B-22-802**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2021, Chapters 228, 235

22 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

23 Section 1. Section **78B-22-802** is amended to read:

24 **78B-22-802 . Child Welfare Parental Representation Program -- Creation --**

25 **Duties -- Annual report -- Budget.**

26 (1) There is created within the office the Child Welfare Parental Representation Program.

27 (2)[(a)] The office shall:

28 [(i)] (a) administer and enforce the program in accordance with this part;

29 [(ii)] (b) manage the operation and budget of the program;

30 [(iii)] (c) develop and provide educational and training programs for [~~contracted~~]parental

- 31 representation attorneys;
- 32 (d) subject to appropriation from the Legislature, provide support for indigent parental
- 33 defense services through the Indigent Defense Commission grant process;
- 34 (e) administer the Interdisciplinary Parental Representation Program, established in
- 35 Section 80-22-805; and
- 36 ~~[(iv)]~~ (f) provide information and advice to assist a [contracted] parental representation
- 37 attorney to comply with the attorney's professional, contractual, and ethical duties.
- 38 ~~[(b) In administering the program, the office shall contract with:]~~
- 39 ~~[(i) a person who is qualified to perform the program duties under this section; and]~~
- 40 ~~[(ii) an attorney, as an independent contractor, in accordance with Section~~
- 41 ~~78B-22-803.]~~
- 42 (3)(a) The executive director shall prepare a budget of:
- 43 (i) the administrative expenses for the program; and
- 44 (ii) the amount ~~[estimated]~~ expended in the prior year to fund~~[-needed]~~ contracts, the
- 45 Interdisciplinary Parental Representation Program, and other parent representation
- 46 program costs.
- 47 (b) On or before October 1 of each year, the executive director shall report to the
- 48 governor and the Child Welfare Legislative Oversight Panel regarding the preceding
- 49 fiscal year on the operations, activities, and goals of the program.

50 Section 2. **Effective Date.**

51 This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.