

The House Committee on Children and Youth offers the following substitute to  
HB 212:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Code Section 15-11-9 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
2 appointment of a guardian ad litem for a child in a proceeding in juvenile court, so as to  
3 require certain training for guardians ad litem appointed for children in deprivation cases; to  
4 provide that such training shall not be in addition to current continuing legal education  
5 requirements for attorneys; to provide for exemptions in certain circumstances; to provide  
6 for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

8 **SECTION 1.**

9 Code Section 15-11-9 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to appointment of  
10 a guardian ad litem for a child in a proceeding in juvenile court, is amended by striking  
11 subsection (b) and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

12 "(b) The court at any stage of a proceeding under this article, on application of a party or  
13 on its own motion, shall appoint a guardian ad litem for a child who is a party to the  
14 proceeding if the child has no parent, guardian, or custodian appearing on the child's behalf  
15 or if the interests of the parent, guardian, or custodian appearing on the child's behalf  
16 conflict with the child's interests or in any other case in which the interests of the child  
17 require a guardian. A party to the proceeding or the employee or representative of a party  
18 to the proceeding shall not be appointed. In deprivation cases, a person appointed as a  
19 child's guardian ad litem must have received before the appointment, training appropriate  
20 to the role that is administered or approved by the Office of the Child Advocate, and may  
21 be an attorney or court appointed special advocate, or both, may be appointed as the child's  
22 guardian ad litem. For attorneys, the preappointment training required pursuant to this  
23 Code section shall be satisfied within attorneys' existing continuing legal education  
24 obligations and shall not require attorneys to complete continuing legal education hours in  
25 addition to those currently required by the State Bar of Georgia. The Office of the Child  
26 Advocate shall exempt from the training required by this Code section attorneys who have

1 practiced as guardians ad litem in juvenile court deprivation proceedings for three or more  
2 years and have demonstrated a proficiency in child representation."

3 **SECTION 2.**

4 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law  
5 without such approval.

6 **SECTION 3.**

7 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.