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House Bill 155 – Court System Provide Visitors & Experts

Sectional Analysis

"An Act relating to court-appointed visitors and experts; relating to the powers and duties of the office of public advocacy; relating to the powers and duties of the Alaska Court System; and providing for an effective date."

Section 1 – Repeals and reenacts AS 13.26.226 (d) to read: The Alaska Court System shall provide visitors and experts in guardianship proceedings under AS 13.26.291. The Alaska Court System may contract for services of court-appointed visitors and experts.

Section 2 – Amends AS 13.26.291 (a) to stipulate that the Alaska Court System shall bear the costs of the visitors and experts appointed under AS 13.26.226 (c).

Section 3 – Amends AS 44.21.410 (a) to remove paragraph 2 and renumber the remaining paragraph.

Section 4 – Amends AS.21.420 (c) to remove language allowing the Commissioner of Administration to contract for services for court visitors and experts to perform the duties set out in AS 44.21.410.

Section 5 – Amends AS 44.21.440 (b) to remove a reference to court visitors from language prohibiting the Office of Public Advocacy from using improper pressure to influence the professional judgment of a person paid by the office.

Section 6 – Amends AS.30.839 (d) to remove language allowing the court to direct the Office of Public Advocacy to provide a court visitor to investigate whether a patient can give or withhold informed consent in psychotropic medication proceedings during involuntary commitments.

Section 7 – Amends 47.30.839 to add a new subsection to read: (j) The Alaska Court System shall provide visitors in proceedings under this section. The Alaska Court System may contract for services of court-appointed visitors.

Section 8 – Amends the uncodified law of the State of Alaska to add transition language stipulating that the act applies to guardianship proceedings under AS 13.26.291 and proceedings under AS.30.839 commenced on or after the effective date of the act. The section further amends the uncodified law of the State of Alaska to ensure that the Office of Public Advocacy shall provide visitors and experts in guardianship proceedings and visitors in proceedings under AS 47.30.839 that were commenced before the effective date of the act.

Section 9 – Provides an effective date of July 1, 2021.