

ARIZONA STATE LEGISLATURE

JOINT LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY

Minutes of the Meeting
September 29, 2022
10:00 A.M., HHR 4

Members of the public may access a livestream of the meeting here:
<https://www.azleg.gov/videoplayer/?clientID=6361162879&eventID=2022091013>

Members Present:

Senator Nancy Barto, Co-Chair
Senator Kelly Townsend
Senator Victoria Steele

Representative Joanne Osborne, Co-Chair
Representative Kelli Butler
Representative Gail Griffin

Staff:

Michael Madden, Senate Research Analyst
Ahjahna Graham, House Research Analyst
Jeremy Moldovan, House Assistant Research Analyst

Co-Chair Osborne called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m. and attendance was noted.

INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS

Representative Osborne asked that the Members introduce themselves.

GUARDIAN UPDATE

Department of Child Safety (DCS)

Mike Faust, Director, Department of Child Safety, discussed the implementation of the Guardian system, the continual improvements of access to information between agencies and answered questions posed by the Committee.

Foster Care Review Boards/Courts

Caroline Lutt-Owens, Director, Dependent Children's Services Division, Administrative Office of the Courts, discussed the implementation and the effectiveness of the Guardian System, problems with access to information by the Foster Care Review Board and answered questions posed by the Committee.

Mr. Faust addressed areas of discussion from the Foster Care Review Board and answered questions posed by the Committee.

Arizona Ombudsman - Citizens Aide

Joanne MacDonnell, Arizona Ombudsman Citizens' Aide, discussed the CHILDS and Guardian systems progression, explained training and access issues with DCS and the lack of shared information. Ms. MacDonnell answered questions posed by the Committee.

Mr. Faust addressed the areas of concern from the Ombudsman, discussed DCS staffing and answered questions posed by the Committee.

DCS – REVIEW OF NORTH STAR INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES INCIDENT

Mr. Faust gave an overview of the North Star group home incident, discussed housing options for youth and DCS' responsibilities. Mr. Faust answered questions posed by the Committee.

Senator Barto read a letter from a former employee of North Star Independent Living Services and asked questions of Director Faust.

Mr. Faust responded to Senator Barto and answered questions posed by the Committee.

DCS AGENCY UPDATE

Mr. Faust encouraged Members to schedule confidential briefings for further information and explained how the Legislature could help improve DCS as an agency and answered questions posed by the Committee.

Mr. Faust explained that his office would deliver a detailed package containing further explanation on the North Star Independent Living Services incident, DCS group homes and of the Guardian system integration to the Members.

Representative Osborne requested additional items from Mr. Faust in preparation for the next meeting.

Senator Barto thanked the Committee and the agencies for their time.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracey Gardner
Committee Secretary

(Audio recordings and attachments are on file in the Secretary of the Senate's Office/Resource Center, Room 115. Audio archives are available at <http://www.azleg.gov>)