



NEWS RELEASE

Arizona House of Representatives

Representative Walt Blackman (R-7)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Arizona House Advances Rep. Blackman's HB2079 to Protect and Prioritize Vulnerable Children

Ensures Guardianship Process Puts Children's Well-Being First

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX – The Arizona House of Representatives passed [HB2079](#) on Monday, a bill by Representative Walt Blackman to streamline the guardianship process and prioritize minors' best interests. The bill strengthens guardianship procedures, removes bureaucratic delays, and prioritizes stable homes for children.

Under current law, minors—especially those in complex or unstable family situations—often face unnecessary legal obstacles in securing a guardian. HB2079 strengthens protections by:

- Ensuring guardianship decisions are made based on the child's best interest, not legal loopholes.
- Allowing 16- and 17-year-olds without parental support to have a clearer pathway to guardianship.
- Protecting minors from unnecessary delays by permitting courts to extend temporary guardianships when needed.
- Ensuring due diligence in locating a child's living parent while prioritizing stability over red tape.

“This bill is about one thing and one thing only: putting kids first. We won't let politics or outdated legal hurdles prevent children from getting the care and stability they need,” said Representative Walt Blackman. **“We are ensuring that guardianship decisions are made swiftly, fairly, and in the best interest of the child—not based on bureaucracy or red tape.”**

HB2079 also ensures that minors 16 and older, who are not part of an open dependency case, have a greater say in their future. By recognizing their unique circumstances, the bill allows courts to grant guardianship when no willing or able parent is present, preventing unnecessary hardships for vulnerable youth.

“For too long, kids in Arizona have fallen through the cracks because of slow-moving legal procedures and unnecessary court delays,” Representative Blackman added. **“We need to be proactive in protecting and supporting them, not making them wait for a system that doesn't always work in their favor.”**

The bill has received strong bipartisan support from child advocacy groups, family law experts, and community leaders who recognize the importance of prioritizing children's well-being over politics.

HB2079 will now move to the Senate for further consideration. Lawmakers, advocates, and families across the state are hopeful that this legislation will be signed into law, ensuring that children in need receive the stability and support they deserve.