

**The Florida Senate**  
**COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA**

**CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND ELDER AFFAIRS**

**Senator Sobel, Chair**  
**Senator Altman, Vice Chair**

**MEETING DATE:** Thursday, January 8, 2015

**TIME:** 9:00 —11:00 a.m.

**PLACE:** 301 Senate Office Building

**MEMBERS:** Senator Sobel, Chair; Senator Altman, Vice Chair; Senators Dean, Detert, Garcia, and Ring

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	COMMITTEE ACTION
1	Introductory Remarks - Chair Sobel		Discussed
2	Committee Members' Remarks		Discussed
3	Update from Department of Children and Families - Mike Carroll, Secretary		Presented
4	Update from Agency for Persons with Disabilities - Barbara Palmer, Executive Director		Presented
5	Update from Department of Elder Affairs - Sam Verghese, Secretary		Presented
6	Update from Department of Revenue - Ann Coffin, Child Support Enforcement Program		Presented
7	Other Related Meeting Documents		

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# **DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE**

## **CHILD SUPPORT PROGRAM**

Senate Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs  
January 8, 2015



# VISION

**WORKING WITH**  
**FAMILIES AND PARTNERS**  
**TO HELP CHILDREN**  
**RECEIVE THE**  
**CHILD SUPPORT**  
**THEY NEED AND DESERVE**





# SERVICES

- Families receive child support services through our Program, private attorneys or filing pro se actions
- We provide services in 65 counties and through contracts in two counties

Manatee County  
cases are handled by the Clerk of Court

Miami-Dade County  
cases are handled by the State Attorney's Office



# SERVICES

**1.01 million cases** maintained  
**989,328 minor children** served

## Services Available

- Locate parents, employers, assets
- Establish paternity
- Establish and modify child support orders
- Receive and distribute child support payments
- Monitor and take action to help parents comply with child support orders



# SERVICES

## ESTABLISHING A CHILD SUPPORT ORDER

The first step in a child support case is establishing the initial child support order. We work with families and partners to help children receive the support they need and deserve.

A child support order sets the amount of support parents are required to provide and can also establish paternity and medical support obligations. Support orders can also be modified as the circumstances of the family change.

The Child Support Program has two ways to establish and modify support orders, judicially and administratively. We also partner with other state child support agencies when one parent lives in another state.

**ADMINISTRATIVE ESTABLISHMENT**

**JUDICIAL ESTABLISHMENT**

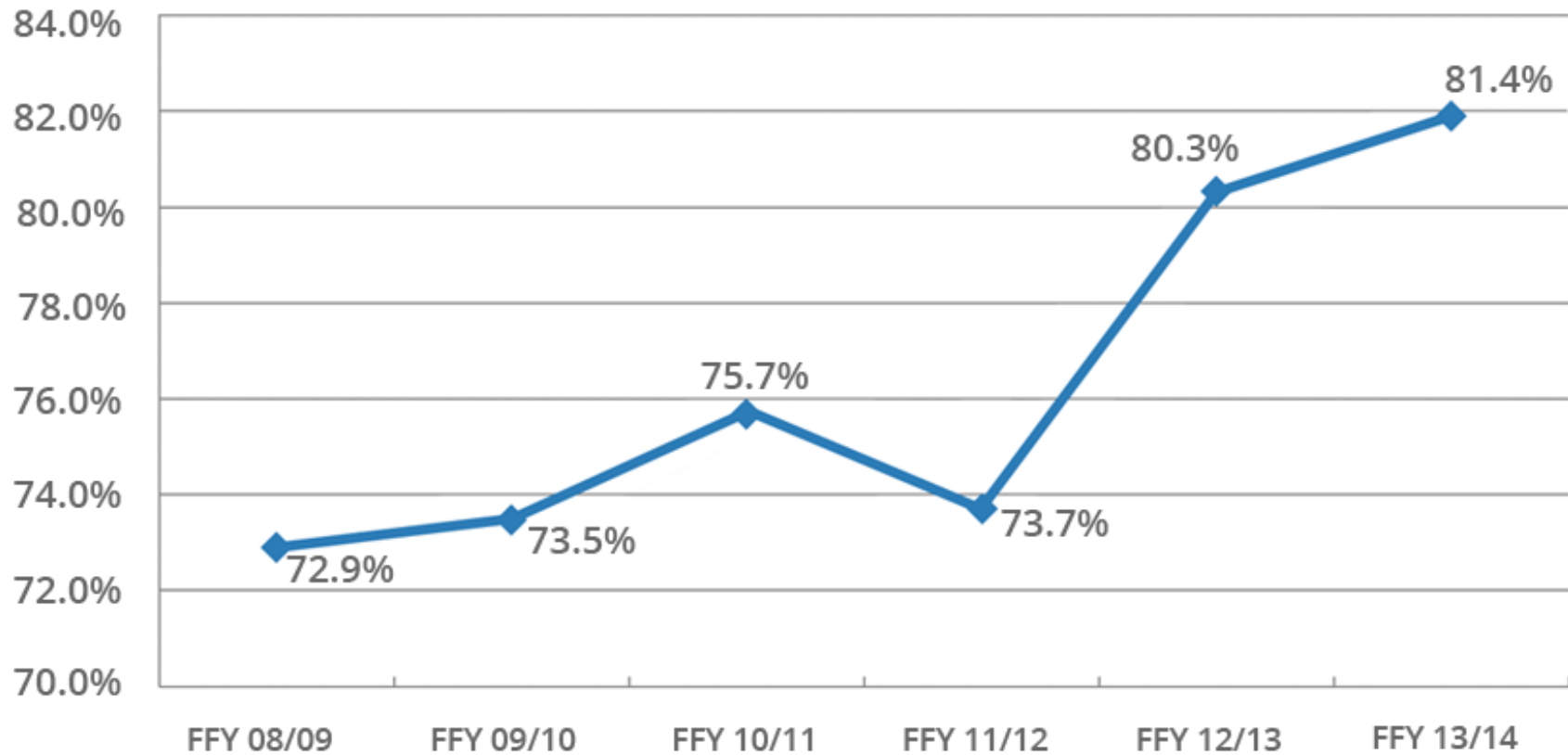
**PATERNITY ESTABLISHMENT**

**ORDER MODIFICATION**



# SERVICES

## Percent of Families with a Child Support Order



# SERVICES

## ACHIEVING VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE

Once a child support order is established, we work with families and partners to help children receive the support they need and deserve.

Our partners are not only parents; we work with: employers, financial institutions, the IRS, other state and local agencies and the judiciary all with a goal of reaching voluntary compliance.

The Child Support Program has a variety of tools available to assist in this effort. State and federal laws apply to how and when certain tools can be used. We also partner with other state child support agencies when one parent lives in another state.

**WAGE WITHHOLDING**

**SUSPENSION ACTIONS**

**INTERCEPTS**

**COURT ACTIONS**

**LEVY ON BANK ACCOUNTS**

**REPORTS TO CONSUMER AGENCIES**

**LIENS**



# COLLECTIONS

**\$1.57 Billion**  
in child support  
collected in FFY2014



**98%**  
went to families



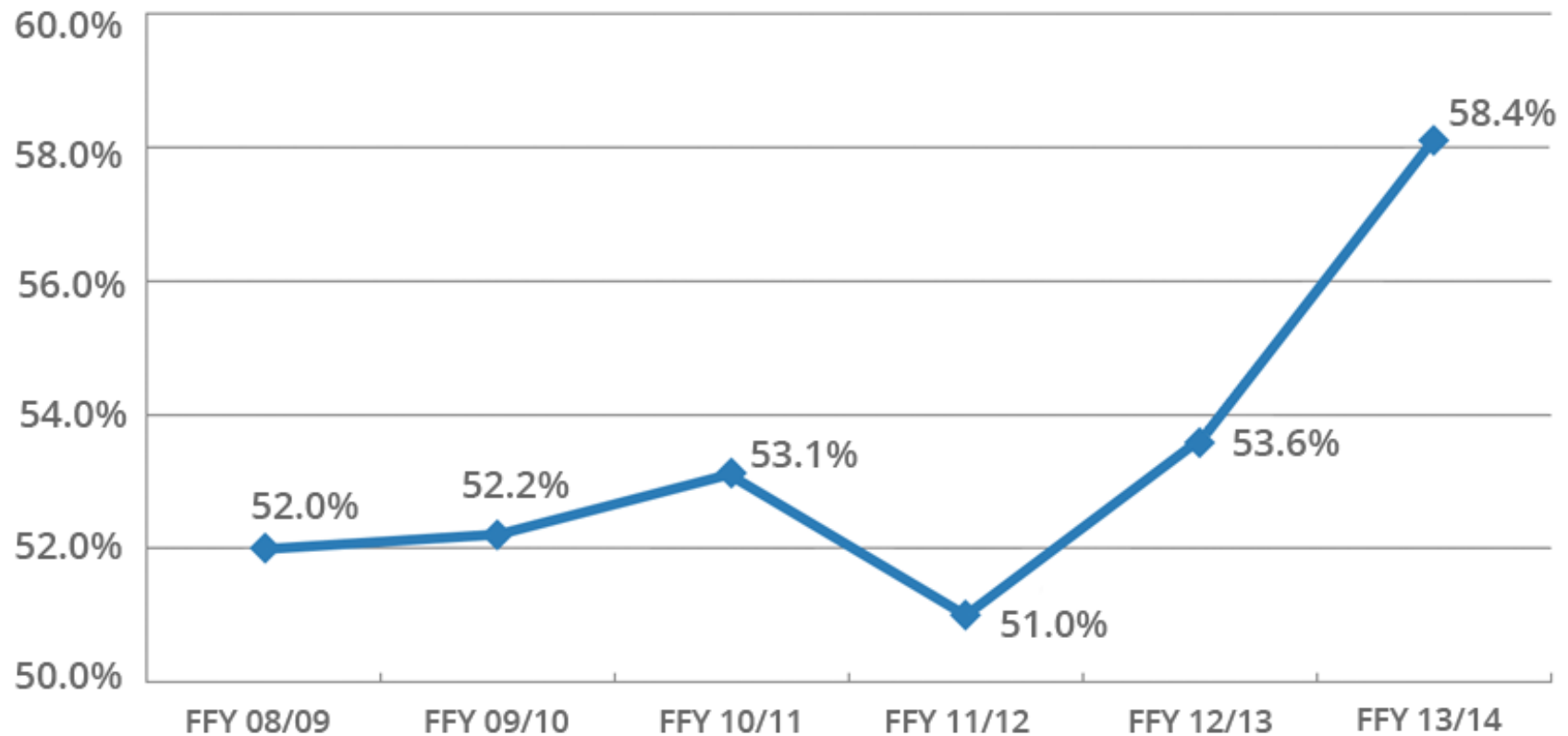
**Remaining 2%**  
reimbursed public  
assistance dollars

**\$1.02 Billion**  
collected through income withholding  
from the parent's paycheck



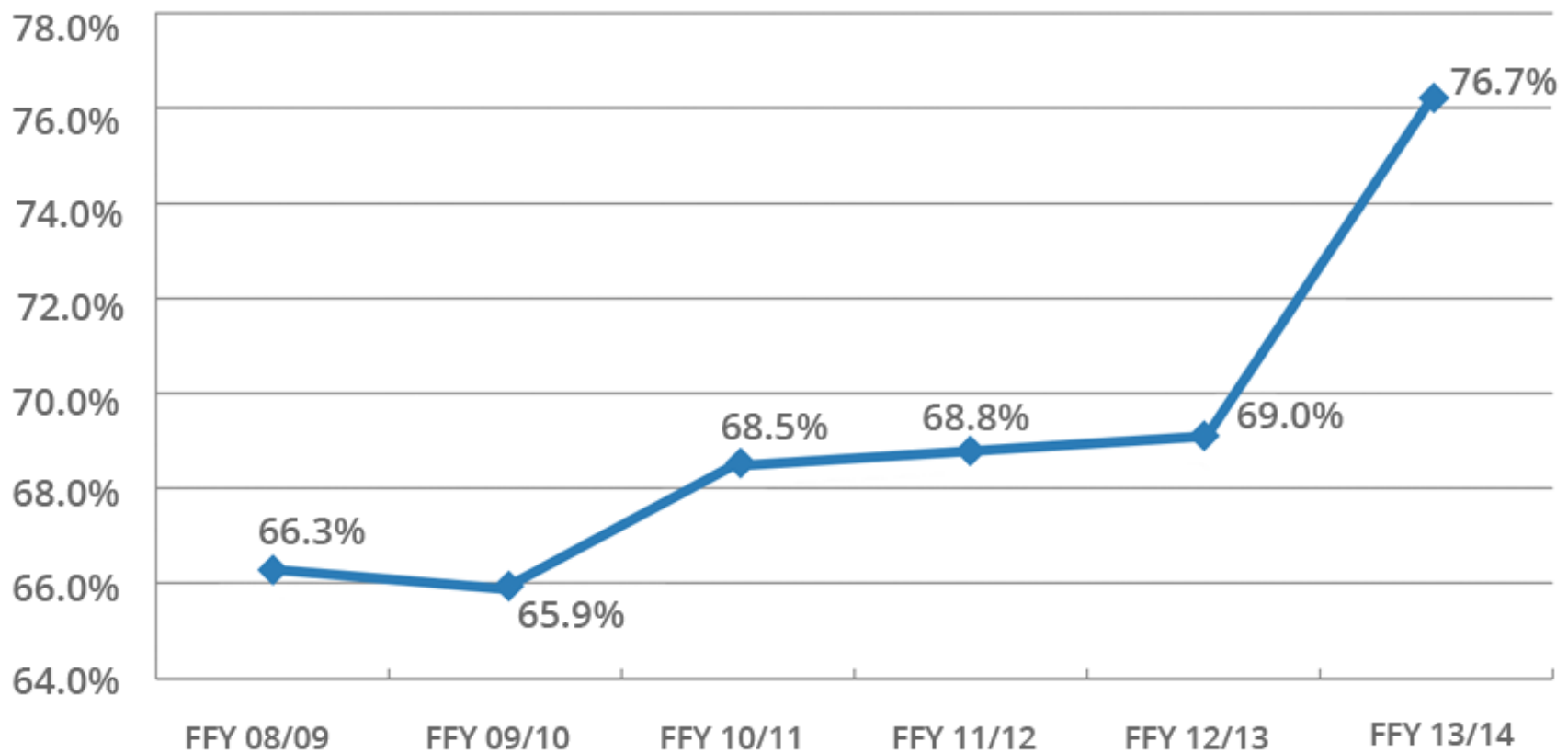
# SERVICES

## Percent of Current Support Paid in the Month it is Due



# SERVICES

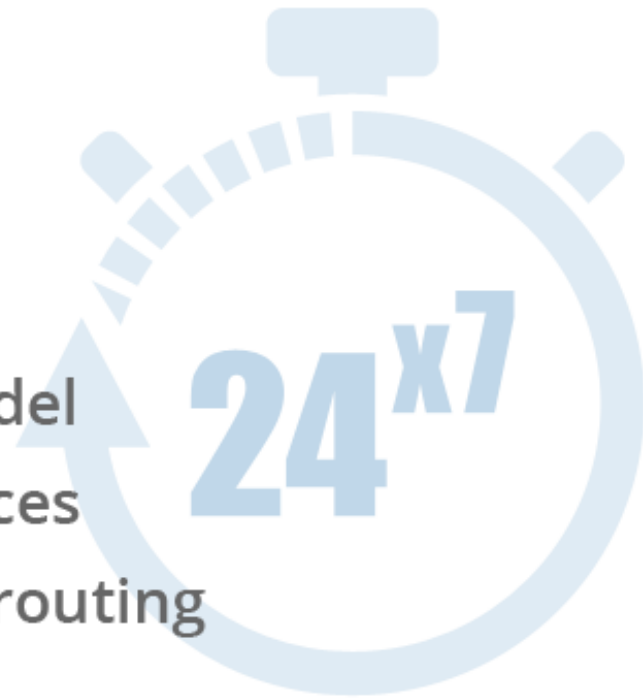
## Percent of Child Support Paid in the Year it is Due





# CUSTOMER SERVICE

- Employer portal
- eServices web portal
- Web chat
- Walk-in customer service model
- Self-help stations in local offices
- Skill-based customer service routing



# COST EFFECTIVENESS



For every **\$1.00** spent...

...the child support program  
collects **\$5.75**



# QUESTIONS?



# DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE • CHILD SUPPORT PROGRAM

## WAGE WITHHOLDING

Payroll deduction is the Child Support Program's most effective collection tool. When the Program issues a wage withholding notice, the employer makes timely and consistent payments on behalf of the employee. More than half of all child support collections come from wage withholding.



## SUSPENSION ACTIONS

Before suspending a license or other important government document, the parent receives notice. If the parent does not pay, reach an agreement with us or contest the action, the Program may suspend:

- Driver licenses
- Passports
- Professional licenses
- Vessel or vehicle registrations
- Hunting or fishing licenses



## ACHIEVING VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE

Once a child support order is established, we work with families and partners to help children receive the support they need and deserve.

Our partners are not only parents; we work with: employers, financial institutions, the IRS, other state and local agencies and the judiciary all with a goal of reaching voluntary compliance.

The Child Support Program has a variety of tools available to assist in this effort. State and federal laws apply to how and when certain tools can be used. We also partner with other state child support agencies when one parent lives in another state.

## REPORTS TO CONSUMER AGENCIES

Like other creditors, the Child Support Program can report past-due amounts to credit agencies.



## LEVY ON BANK ACCOUNTS

The Child Support Program can collect past-due support from financial institutions. Financial institution records are matched to parents who owe child support. When there is a match, the Program notifies the parent of the possible levy.



## COURT ACTION

The Child Support Program can refer cases to court for judicial intervention. Outcomes vary depending on each case, but can include:

- Full or partial payment of past-due support
- Contempt of court



## LIENS

The Child Support Program can file liens to collect past-due support on:

- Vehicles
- Boats
- Personal watercrafts
- Mobile homes
- Real estate



## INTERCEPTS

The Child Support Program can intercept money from:

- Insurance settlements
- IRS tax refunds
- Liquidated unclaimed property
- Lottery winnings
- Reemployment assistance
- Workers' compensation benefits



# DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE • CHILD SUPPORT PROGRAM

## ADMINISTRATIVE



The Child Support Program can establish paternity and child support obligations administratively. Orders established through this process have the same force and effect as a court order.

An administrative action begins by serving a notice of the administrative proceeding and asking parents for financial and other information needed to determine the child support obligation. Based on the information provided by the parents and the Florida Child Support Guidelines, we calculate the amount of child support to be ordered and mail both parents a proposed order.

Parents can agree to the proposed order; provide additional information; meet with us or request a hearing.

A final support order that includes an income deduction order is issued and filed with the Clerk of Court and provided to the parents. The order provides the parents with instructions on how to pay their child support.



## PATERNITY

Paternity needs to be established for children born out of wedlock before support can be ordered. Establishing paternity identifies a child's legal father.

Florida allows parents to establish paternity voluntarily at the hospital when the child is born or any time after leaving the hospital by signing a voluntary acknowledgment of paternity.

We help parents establish paternity using both judicial and administrative processes described here. We also help parents determine the legal father with genetic tests. The genetic test collection is handled in our offices and a certified lab completes the tests and issues a report.

The final step in establishing paternity is updating the child's birth certificate with the father's name at the Bureau of Vital Statistics.

## ESTABLISHING A CHILD SUPPORT ORDER

The first step in a child support case is establishing the initial child support order. We work with families and partners to help children receive the support they need and deserve.

A child support order sets the amount of support parents are required to provide and can also establish paternity and medical support obligations. Support orders can also be modified as the circumstances of the family change.

The Child Support Program has two ways to establish and modify support orders, judicially and administratively. We also partner with other state child support agencies when one parent lives in another state.

## ORDER MODIFICATION



As the circumstances of a family change, the child support order may need to be changed to reflect the current needs of the parents and child. Parents can ask us to review their support order or they can seek to modify the order themselves. The Child Support Program collects information on the change of circumstances and financial information from the parents to determine if the Program should attempt to modify the order. Administrative orders can be modified using the administrative process described above. Administrative and judicial orders can be modified using the judicial process described below.

## JUDICIAL



A judicial support order is a child support order issued by the court. The Child Support Program partners with public and private attorneys and the Clerks of Court to judicially establish support orders.

A judicial action begins with our attorney filing a petition in circuit court and having it served on the parent who owes support. Information is provided by the parents and used to calculate the amount of child support to be ordered under the Florida Child Support Guidelines.

A hearing is held and the court issues a support order that includes an income deduction order. The order provides the parents with instructions on how to pay their child support.

# DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

# CHILD SUPPORT PROGRAM

## VISION

Working with families and partners to help children receive the child support they need and deserve

## MISSION

- Serve customers with respect, concern and professionalism
- Make it easier for parents to provide support to their children
- Work with parents, partners and the community to continually improve the child support program

## SERVICES

We provide services to over **1.01 million cases** involving over **989,000 minor children**

Percent of Families with a Child Support Order



## COLLECTIONS

**\$1.57 Billion** in child support collected in FFY2014



**98%** went to families

**Remaining 2%** reimbursed public assistance dollars

**\$1.02 Billion** collected through income withholding from the parent's paycheck



Percent of Current Support Paid in the Month it is Due



Percent of Child Support Paid in the Year it is Due



## CUSTOMER SERVICE

- Employer portal
- eServices web portal
- Web chat
- Walk-in customer service model
- Self-help stations in local offices
- Skill-based customer service routing

**24x7**

## COST EFFECTIVENESS



For every **\$1.00** spent...



...the child support program collects **\$5.75**

THE FLORIDA SENATE  
**APPEARANCE RECORD**

(Deliver BOTH copies of this form to the Senator or Senate Professional Staff conducting the meeting)



12-8-14

Meeting Date

Bill Number (if applicable)

N/A

Topic

Guardian Ad - Liften  
GUARDIAN 40 CITIZEN Alan

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

N/A

Name

ALAN ABROMOWITZ Abromowitz

Job Title

Executive Director GAL

Address

Street

460 S. Calhoun St

Phone

850-241-3230

City

Tallahassee

State

FL

Zip

32320

Email

Alan.Abramowitz@gal.fl.gov

Speaking:

For

Against

Information

Waive Speaking:

In Support

Against

(The Chair will read this information into the record.)

Representing

GAL

Appearing at request of Chair:

Yes

No

Lobbyist registered with Legislature:

Yes

No

While it is a Senate tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this meeting. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard.

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

# CourtSmart Tag Report

**Room:** SB 301  
**Caption:** Senate Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs

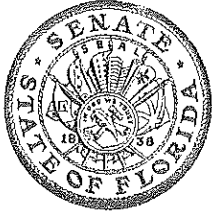
**Type:** ]  
**Judge:**

**Started:** 1/8/2015 9:06:57 AM  
**Ends:** 1/8/2015 10:48:30 AM      **Length:** 01:41:34

9:07:09 AM Roll Call  
9:07:30 AM TAB 1 Introductory Remarks-Chair Sobel  
9:10:49 AM TAB 2-Committee Members' Remarks  
9:10:56 AM Sen. Detert  
9:12:18 AM Sen Sobel, Chair  
9:13:35 AM Sen. Garcia  
9:14:29 AM Chair  
9:15:23 AM Sen. Altman, Vice Chair  
9:17:48 AM Chair  
9:18:26 AM Vice Chair  
9:20:07 AM Chair  
9:20:17 AM Vice Chair  
9:20:30 AM Chair  
9:23:02 AM Discussion by Chair on Future Bills  
9:23:31 AM TAB 3-Update from Department of Children and Families-Mike Carroll, Secretary  
9:25:49 AM Topic: Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
9:27:36 AM Topic: Child Welfare  
9:30:10 AM Topic: Hiring  
9:31:41 AM Topic: SB 1666  
9:34:58 AM Topic: Child Fatality Website  
9:42:51 AM Chair  
9:43:05 AM Chair Opens Questions  
9:43:08 AM Sen. Detert  
9:45:21 AM Chair  
9:45:29 AM Vice Chair  
9:45:38 AM Mike Carroll Responds  
9:46:46 AM Chair  
9:48:05 AM Mike Carroll Responds  
9:49:56 AM Chair  
9:50:30 AM Mike Carroll Responds  
9:50:42 AM Chair  
9:51:01 AM Mike Carroll Responds  
9:51:33 AM Chair  
9:51:44 AM Mike Carroll Responds  
9:52:19 AM Chair  
9:52:56 AM TAB 4-Update from Agency for Persons with Disabilities-Barbara Palmer, Executive Director  
9:54:57 AM Topic: Priorities  
9:55:20 AM Topic: Employment  
9:56:49 AM Topic: Quality Service  
10:00:31 AM Topic: Waiting List  
10:01:19 AM Topic: Fiscal Accountability  
10:03:30 AM Topic: Providers  
10:05:17 AM Chair Opens Questions  
10:06:03 AM Barbara Palmer Responds  
10:08:51 AM Chair  
10:10:00 AM Vice Chair  
10:10:18 AM Barbara Palmer Responds  
10:11:00 AM Vice Chair  
10:11:10 AM Barbara Palmer Responds  
10:11:24 AM Chair  
10:11:49 AM TAB 5-Update from Dept. of Elder Affairs-Sam Verghese, Secretary  
10:14:03 AM Topic: House Bill 709



10:15:30 AM Topic: Statewide Public Guardianship Office  
10:19:39 AM Chair Opens Questions  
10:20:44 AM Sam Verghese Responds  
10:21:32 AM Sen. Garcia  
10:22:57 AM Chair  
10:24:50 AM Sam Verghese Responds  
10:26:34 AM Chair  
10:28:21 AM TAB 6-Update from Dept. of Revenue-Ann Coffin, Child Support Enforcement Program  
10:29:22 AM Topic: Services  
10:33:28 AM Topic: Collections  
10:35:43 AM Topic: Customer Service  
10:38:05 AM Topic: Cost Effectiveness  
10:38:27 AM Chair Opens Questions  
10:38:53 AM Ann Coffin Responds  
10:38:55 AM Chair  
10:39:28 AM Ann Coffin Responds  
10:40:40 AM Chair  
10:40:46 AM Ann Coffin Responds  
10:41:31 AM Chair  
10:41:43 AM Ann Coffin Responds  
10:42:13 AM Chair  
10:43:31 AM Public Comment from Alan Abromowitz, GAL Program  
10:47:26 AM Chair Opens Questions  
10:48:22 AM Meeting Adjourned



## THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

**COMMITTEES:**  
Environmental Preservation and  
Conservation, *Chair*  
Agriculture, *Vice Chair*  
Appropriations Subcommittee on General  
Government  
Children, Families, and Elder Affairs  
Community Affairs  
Ethics and Elections

**SENATOR CHARLES S. DEAN, SR.**

5th District

January 5, 2015

The Honorable Eleanor Sobel  
410 Senate Office Building  
404 South Monroe St.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

Dear Chair Sobel,

The purpose of this letter is to seek your permission to be excused from the scheduled Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee meeting on January 8, 2015. Due to unforeseen circumstances, I will not be able to attend.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me personally.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles S. Dean".

Charles S. Dean  
State Senator District 5

cc: Claude Hendon, Staff Director

**REPLY TO:**

- 405 Tompkins Street, Inverness, Florida 34450 (352) 860-5175
- 311 Senate Office Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5005
- 315 SE 25th Avenue, Ocala, Florida 34471-2689 (352) 873-6513

Senate's Website: [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov)

**ANDY GARDINER**  
President of the Senate

**GARRETT RICHTER**  
President Pro Tempore



## THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

**COMMITTEES:**  
Governmental Oversight and Accountability, *Chair*  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Finance and  
Tax, *Vice Chair*  
Appropriations  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation,  
Tourism, and Economic Development  
Banking and Insurance  
Commerce and Tourism  
Judiciary  
Rules

**JOINT COMMITTEES:**  
Joint Legislative Auditing Committee  
Joint Select Committee on Collective Bargaining

**SENATOR JEREMY RING**  
29th District

January 6, 2015

Senator Eleanor Sobel  
410 Senate Office Building  
404 S. Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

Dear Chairwoman Sobel,

I am requesting to be excused from the Senate Children Families and Elder Affairs meeting scheduled for January 8th due to a personal matter than requires my early return to my districts.

Thank you in advance for considering this request to be excused from the Children Families and Elder Affairs Committee on January 7<sup>th</sup> due to this conflict. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeremy Ring".

Jeremy Ring  
Senator District 29

CC: Claude Hendon, Staff Director

**REPLY TO:**

- 5790 Margate Boulevard, Margate, Florida 33063 (954) 917-1392 FAX: (954) 917-1394
- 405 Senate Office Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5029

Senate's Website: [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov)

**ANDY GARDINER**  
President of the Senate

**GARRETT RICHTER**  
President Pro Tempore