

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to special protections in judicial
3 proceedings; amending s. 92.55, F.S.; authorizing a
4 court to require a pro se defendant to question
5 certain victims and witnesses through standby counsel
6 at any trial, hearing, or deposition upon specified
7 findings; providing an effective date.
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9 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
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11 **Section 1. Subsection (7) is added to section 92.55,**
12 **Florida Statutes, to read:**

13 92.55 Special protections in proceedings involving victim
14 or witness under 18, person with intellectual disability, or
15 sexual offense victim.—

16 (7) Upon motion of any party, upon motion of a parent,
17 guardian, attorney, guardian ad litem, or other advocate
18 appointed by the court under s. 914.17 for a victim or witness
19 under the age of 18, a person who has an intellectual
20 disability, or a sexual offense victim or witness, or upon its
21 own motion, the court may require a pro se defendant to present,
22 ask, or in any way communicate questions to such person, victim,
23 or witness through standby counsel, using questions provided or
24 approved by the defendant, at any trial, hearing, or deposition
25 if the court makes specific findings on the record that such a

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requirement is necessary to protect the person, victim, or
witness from emotional or mental harm that would result from
direct communication with the defendant.

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.