

**Public Policy Position  
HB 4522**

The Children's Law Section is a voluntary membership section of the State Bar of Michigan, comprised of 501 members. The Children's Law Section is not the State Bar of Michigan and the position expressed herein is that of the Children's Law Section only and not the State Bar of Michigan. The State Bar's position in this matter is to support HB 4522.

The Children's Law Section has a public policy decision-making body with 18 members. On June 15, 2023, the Section adopted its position after a discussion and vote at a scheduled meeting. 13 members voted in favor of the Section's position, 0 members voted against this position, 0 members abstained, 5 members did not vote.

**Support with Amendments**

**Explanation:**

Children's Law Section supports HB 4522. However, we do recommend two amendments. First, in section 1099bb(1), we recommend that "a representative of the bar specializing in family or juvenile law" be changed to "a representative of the bar specializing in children's law" as an attorney specializing in family law may not have the knowledge and experience of children's law necessary to sign onto such a treatment court plan. Second, we recommend that a provision be added clarifying that respondent-parents who participate in treatment court have the same right to and continuity of counsel as they would in all other child welfare proceedings. The right to counsel is essential in these adversarial proceedings, and we believe that it should be clear that participation in treatment court does not in any way abrogate the right to counsel. We further believe that continuity of counsel is critical and that a participant should not be forced to accept a new or different attorney than the one who has represented them in all other aspects of the case.

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