



CASA Talking Points

- Begin your meeting by sharing your mission, local statistics (x children are served by x volunteers; there are x children in the system in your county/circuit that are still waiting to have a CASA, etc.) and good news about your local program (community events, fundraisers, etc.).
- Thank the legislators by letting them know you sincerely appreciate the support CASA has received over the past years.
- As a community partner in the child welfare system, CASA is dedicated to helping improve the futures of abused and neglected children who are caught in a massive state system.
- Discuss the **Technical Corrections Bill for the Juvenile Justice Reform Bill** and ask for support.
 - Eliminate the language making CASA the Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) whenever possible in CHINS and delinquency cases.
 - Serving on CHINS and delinquency cases expands the CASA program beyond its mission and funding, which are restricted to providing volunteers for abused and neglected children in dependency proceedings.
 - In Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) cases, the code should require the appointment of a GAL, with preference for a CASA when available, using the same language as appears in the dependency article to ensure consistency.
 - Appointment of a GAL is required during the dependency proceeding but is left permissive in the context of TPR. When HB 242 was developed, the child's absolute right to counsel and right to representation by a GAL during the dependency case were established, but the corresponding TPR provision was retained from pre-HB 242 law. In light of the changes made to the representation scheme during the dependency case, the lack of a mandatory GAL appointment at TPR is inconsistent.
- Discuss **Georgia CASA Funding Request** and ask for support.
 - See separate sheet in packet.
- Finish your meeting by telling your legislators that you hope that if they have any questions about CASA as the session progresses that they will feel free to contact you.