

Amendment to SB 650-FN

1 Amend the bill by replacing sections 1-2 with the following:

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3 1 Termination of Parental Rights; Fees and Court Costs. Amend RSA 170-C:13 to read as
4 follows:

5 170-C:13 Fees and Court Costs.

6 I. The petitioner shall pay all entry fees and court costs including costs of giving notice, costs
7 of advertising, and court-appointed guardian ad litem fees. The court, however, may waive entry
8 fees and court costs where payment would work a hardship on the petitioner. Where the court
9 waives payment by the petitioner, the state, through the court system, shall pay court costs. The
10 judicial council shall pay the cost of a CASA guardian ad litem appointed for the child or other
11 guardian ad litem in cases arising from an underlying abuse and neglect proceeding when the state
12 is the moving party or in cases where payment would work a hardship on the petitioner. ***The cost***
13 ***of such appointment, including counsel and investigative, expert, or other services and***
14 ***expenses necessary to provide adequate representation, shall be paid from funds***
15 ***appropriated for indigent defense pursuant to RSA 604-A.***

16 II. The department of health and human services is exempted from paying any entry fees
17 and court costs.

18 III. When appointment of counsel is made by the court pursuant to RSA 170-C:10 for a
19 parent determined to be financially unable to employ counsel, the court shall use a financial
20 eligibility guideline established by the office of cost containment to determine if the party is indigent.
21 Upon determination that the party is indigent, the court may appoint counsel, subject to an order of
22 repayment through the office of cost containment. The judicial council shall bear the financial
23 responsibility for the payment of costs for attorneys appointed pursuant to RSA 170-C:10 in
24 accordance with the financial eligibility guideline established by the office of cost containment. ***The***
25 ***cost of such appointment, including counsel and investigative, expert, or other services and***
26 ***expenses necessary to provide adequate representation, shall be paid from funds***
27 ***appropriated for indigent defense pursuant to RSA 604-A. Counsel shall petition the court***
28 ***for investigative, expert, or other services necessary to provide adequate representation. If***
29 ***the court finds that such services are necessary and that the parent is financially unable to***
30 ***obtain them, the court shall authorize counsel to obtain the necessary services on behalf of***
31 ***the parent. Services authorized under this section shall not include the payment of***

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1 *expenses that are the responsibility of any other agency pursuant to RSA 169-C or this*
2 *chapter.*

3 2 Guardians and Conservators; Right to Counsel. Amend RSA 464-A:6, I to read as follows:

4 I. The right to legal counsel for any person for whom a temporary guardian or guardianship
5 of the person and estate, or person, or estate, is sought shall be absolute and unconditional. If the
6 proposed ward does not have his or her own counsel, the court shall appoint counsel for the proposed
7 ward immediately upon the filing of a petition for guardianship of the person and estate, or the
8 person, or estate. *The judicial council shall pay the cost of such appointment, including*
9 *counsel and investigative, expert, or other services and expenses necessary to provide*
10 *adequate representation, from funds appropriated for indigent defense pursuant to RSA*
11 *604-A. Prior to obtaining investigative, expert, and other services necessary to provide*
12 *adequate representation, counsel shall apply to the court and, upon finding that such*
13 *services are necessary and that the person is financially unable to obtain them, the court*
14 *shall authorize counsel to obtain the necessary services on behalf of the person for whom*
15 *temporary guardian or guardianship of the person and estate, or person or estate, is*
16 *sought.*