

Submitter: Craig Bazzi
On Behalf Of: CASA of Marion County
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3196

My wife and I have been CASAs (Court Appointed Special Advocates) for the past 7 years in Marion County. In that time we have seen the importance of CASA in providing a committed advocate for children experiencing substitute care and disruption in their lives. Continuing VOCA funding is critically important for the mission of CASA and the loss of this funding would significantly hamper our ability to assist children and families in need of support. I have had a career in juvenile justice and working with formerly incarcerated adults. Children are often the unintended victims of their parent's and other's decisions. I have seen CASA be able to step into a situation to provide an advocacy for children that agency workers and others in the system cannot provide due to work loads and changes in staffing. To this end I urge the committee to adopt the -1 amendment that includes CASA programs and pass the bill out of committee. Thank you !