



CONSUMER ATTORNEYS OF CALIFORNIA

Seeking Justice for All

Senate backs psych test limits for juvenile abuse victims

SB 755 protects child sex-abuse victims from marathon psychological tests

SACRAMENTO (May 22, 2017) – The state Senate unanimously approved a measure today sponsored by the Consumer Attorneys of California that puts limits on marathon psychological examinations of children who have suffered suspected sexual abuse.

Senate Bill 755, authored by Sen. Jim Beall (D-San Jose), will for the first time limit the length of time for psychological testing of a child under age 15 where there exists credible evidence that the child has been sexually abused.

Civil lawsuits are often the only way a victim and their family can seek justice and the compensation needed to offset the costs of treating mental and physical trauma caused by abuse. But attorneys who represent children in such civil cases report a disturbing practice: Defense team experts who conduct unnecessarily long and abusive psychological exams.

Under current law, parents or guardians are not allowed to sit alongside a child during the exams, and oftentimes a child is not even allowed to take a bathroom break. In some instances, the defense team pushes forward with long exams of child victims even though ample evidence exists from prior criminal cases that have already put defendants in prison.

SB 755 will help address such injustices by putting a limit of no more than three hours, inclusive of breaks, on any psychological testing of a child who is the victim of suspected sexual abuse.

“California needs to do all it can to protect the most vulnerable among us – our children,” said CAOC President Greg Bentley. “SB 755 will put in place common-sense limits that will ensure children don’t become victims anew as they seek civil justice.”

Consumer Attorneys of California is a professional organization of plaintiffs’ attorneys representing consumers seeking accountability against wrongdoers in cases involving personal injury, product liability, environmental degradation and other causes.

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