

Conference of Chief Justices Conference of State Court Administrators

Resolution 3

In Support of Child Welfare Attorney Specialty Certification Program

WHEREAS, the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators recognize the critical importance of qualified and proficient legal representation for children in child abuse and neglect proceedings, for the parents of these children, and for state child welfare agencies; and

WHEREAS, professional certification is one means of encouraging and measuring good practice, which in turn improves the lives of children and their families; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC) has developed a certification program that awards the Child Welfare Law Specialist credential to attorneys upon a showing of proficiency; and

WHEREAS, the NACC proficiency standards include the requirements of substantial experience, education, peer review, and passage of a comprehensive examination; and

WHEREAS, many states have rules authorizing attorney certification programs; and

WHEREAS, the Conferences believe that the NACC certification program has merit and would contribute to improving the outcomes for children and their families by facilitating high quality representation; and

WHEREAS, in 2001, the American Bar Association recognized Child Welfare Law as a legal specialty and in 2004 accredited the NACC as the child welfare law certifying body;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators commend NACC for its efforts and endorse its certification program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conferences encourage their members, consistent with state and local court rules, to consider authorizing the Child Welfare Attorney Specialty Certification Program.

Adopted at the COSCA 2008 Annual Meeting on July 30, 2008.