

STATE SENATOR • JIM BARCIA • 31ST DISTRICT

# Barcia Press Release

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## **Senate Approves Bills to Support Children's Advocacy Centers** *Funding could help assist Nathan Weidner Children's Advocacy Center*

LANSING, Mich. — Yesterday the State Senate voted unanimously to pass a package of bills cosponsored by Senator Jim Barcia (D-Bay City), to increase funds allocated to the Justice System Fund to establish the Children's Advocacy Center Fund to help victims of child sexual abuse. The Nathan Weidner Children's Advocacy Center in Bay City is one of four centers that qualify to split approximately \$1.5 million in total funding.

"Through this legislation, we can further help children who were victims of abuse and work to prevent these crimes from occurring," said Barcia. "The Nathan Weidner Children's Advocacy Centers truly makes a difference in a child's life in ensuring their recovery and support. These bills will improve public awareness of this issue and fight back against abuse."

The bills amend the juvenile code to increase the minimum costs charged to a juvenile offender, would establish the "Children's Advocacy Center Fund" and provide for the allocation of money from the Justice System Fund to the "Sexual Assault Victims' Medical Forensic Intervention and Treatment Fund." This legislation now heads to the House of Representatives where Barcia anticipates quick approval and enactment of the legislation by the end of the year.

Children's Advocacy Centers (CAC) are non-profit, child-focused organizations that provide training, prevention, intervention and treatment services to fight child abuse and neglect and also work to further prevent victimization of children.

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