



OFFICE OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE

Nathan Deal
Governor

Tom C. Rawlings
Director

January 5, 2017

RE: Office of the Child Advocate
Letter of Introduction

As we begin a new year and a new legislative session, I have been given the honor of working with each of you as Governor Deal's selection to lead the State Office of the Child Advocate. I look forward to partnering in efforts to improve our State's care and treatment of abused and neglected children.

As you are aware, OCA carries a legislative mandate to provide independent oversight of agencies responsible for providing services to abused and neglected children. Our office investigates and seeks to resolve complaints by or on behalf of children concerning agency actions. Through that role, we are able to assist the Governor and his agency heads to make continual improvements in our state's child protection system.

In the course of doing that work over the past 15 years, my staff and I have developed a wealth of information on best practices for addressing the needs of Georgia's most vulnerable children and their families. We see our role as bringing to bear those best practices and policies for the benefit of children in a number of key areas, including child abuse prevention and treatment, foster care, education, mental health, and juvenile justice.

During the legislative session and beyond, I hope you will call on our office whenever we can be of help to you. Whether you are seeking information on proposed policies, would like to better understand our state's child welfare system, or are looking for private child advocacy organizations with which to partner, we stand ready to assist you.

As some of you know, this is the second time I have been privileged to serve in this role, and I am excited to have the opportunity once again to be lead OCA and provide you credible, reliable, and timely research, advice, and information on Georgia's child welfare system.

Whenever my team and I can be of service to you, please let me know. My email is trawlings@oca.ga.gov, and my cell is (404) 210-3283.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. C. Rawlings".

Tom C. Rawlings
Director, OCA

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER