

By: Casteel

H.B. No. 1472

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of a management trust by a probate court.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 867, Texas Probate Code, is amended by amending Subsections (b), (c), (d), and (f) and adding Subsections (a-1) and (b-1)-(b-5) to read as follows:

(a-1) The following persons may apply for the creation of a trust under this section:

(1) the guardian of the estate of a ward;

(2) the guardian of the person of a ward;

(3) the guardian of both the person of and estate of a ward;

(4) an attorney ad litem or guardian ad litem appointed to represent a ward or the ward's interests;

(5) a person interested in the welfare of an alleged incapacitated person who does not have a guardian of the estate; or

(6) an attorney ad litem or guardian ad litem appointed to represent an alleged incapacitated person who does not have a guardian or that person's interests.

(b) On application by an appropriate person as provided by Subsection (a-1) of this section [~~the guardian of a ward or by a ward's attorney ad litem or an incapacitated person's guardian ad litem at any time after the date of the ad litem's appointment under Section 646 or another provision of this code~~], the court with

1 jurisdiction over the guardianship [~~in which the guardianship~~
2 ~~proceeding is pending~~] may enter an order that creates for the
3 ward's [~~or incapacitated person's~~] benefit a trust for the
4 management of guardianship funds [~~or funds of the incapacitated~~
5 ~~person's estate~~] if the court finds that the creation of the trust
6 is in the ward's [~~or incapacitated person's~~] best interests.
7 [~~Except as provided by Subsections (c) and (d) of this section, the~~
8 ~~court shall appoint a financial institution to serve as trustee of~~
9 ~~the trust.~~]

10 (b-1) On application by an appropriate person as provided by
11 Subsection (a-1) of this section and regardless of whether an
12 application for guardianship has been filed on the alleged
13 incapacitated person's behalf, a proper court may enter an order
14 that creates a trust for the management of the estate of an alleged
15 incapacitated person who does not have a guardian if the court,
16 after a hearing, finds that:

17 (1) the person is an incapacitated person; and

18 (2) the creation of the trust is in the incapacitated
19 person's best interests.

20 (b-2) If a proceeding for the appointment of a guardian for
21 an alleged incapacitated person is pending, an application for the
22 creation of a trust for the alleged incapacitated person under
23 Subsection (b-1) of this section must be filed in the same court in
24 which the guardianship proceeding is pending.

25 (b-3) The court shall conduct a hearing to determine
26 incapacity under Subsection (b-1) of this section using the same
27 procedures and evidentiary standards as required in a hearing for

1 the appointment of a guardian for a proposed ward.

2 (b-4) If, after a hearing, the court finds that a person for
3 whom an application is filed under Subsection (b-1) of this section
4 is an incapacitated person but that it is not in the incapacitated
5 person's best interests to have the court create a management trust
6 for the person's estate, the court may appoint a guardian of the
7 person or estate, or both, for the incapacitated person without the
8 necessity of instituting a separate proceeding for that purpose.

9 (b-5) Except as provided by Subsections (c) and (d) of this
10 section, the court shall appoint a financial institution to serve
11 as trustee of a trust created under this section.

12 (c) If the value of the trust's principal is \$50,000 or
13 less, the court may appoint a person other than a financial
14 institution to serve as trustee of the trust only if the court finds
15 the appointment to be in the ward's or incapacitated person's best
16 interests.

17 (d) If the value of the trust's principal is more than
18 \$50,000, the court may appoint a person other than a financial
19 institution to serve as trustee of the trust only if the court finds
20 that:

21 (1) no financial institution is willing to serve as
22 trustee; and

23 (2) the appointment is in the ward's or incapacitated
24 person's best interests.

25 (f) If a trust is created for a ward, the [The] order shall
26 direct a person holding property belonging to the ward or to which
27 the ward is entitled [~~the guardian or another person~~] to deliver all

1 or part of the property [~~assets of the guardianship~~] to a person or
2 corporate fiduciary appointed by the court as trustee of the trust.
3 If a trust is created for an incapacitated person who does not have
4 a guardian, the order shall direct a person holding property
5 belonging to the incapacitated person or to which the incapacitated
6 person is entitled to deliver all or part of the property to the
7 corporate fiduciary or other person appointed as trustee of the
8 trust. The order shall include terms, conditions, and limitations
9 placed on the trust. The court shall maintain the trust under the
10 same cause number as the guardianship proceeding, if applicable.

11 SECTION 2. Subpart N, Part 4, Chapter XIII, Texas Probate
12 Code, is amended by adding Section 867A to read as follows:

13 Sec. 867A. VENUE. If a proceeding for the appointment of a
14 guardian for the alleged incapacitated person is not pending on the
15 date the application is filed, venue for a proceeding to create a
16 trust for an alleged incapacitated person under Section 867(b-1) of
17 this code must be determined in the same manner as venue for a
18 proceeding for the appointment of a guardian is determined under
19 Section 610 of this code.

20 SECTION 3. Sections 868(a), (b), (d), and (f), Texas
21 Probate Code, are amended to read as follows:

22 (a) Except as provided by Subsection (d) of this section, a
23 trust created under Section 867 of this code must provide that:

24 (1) the ward or incapacitated person is the sole
25 beneficiary of the trust;

26 (2) the trustee may disburse an amount of the trust's
27 principal or income as the trustee determines is necessary to

1 expend for the health, education, support, or maintenance of the
2 ward or incapacitated person;

3 (3) the income of the trust that the trustee does not
4 disburse under Subdivision (2) of this subsection must be added to
5 the principal of the trust;

6 (4) if the trustee is a corporate fiduciary, the
7 trustee serves without giving a bond; and

8 (5) the trustee, on annual application to the court
9 and subject to the court's approval, is entitled to receive
10 reasonable compensation for services that the trustee provided to
11 the ward or incapacitated person as the ward's or incapacitated
12 person's trustee that is:

13 (A) to be paid from the trust's income,
14 principal, or both; and

15 (B) determined in the same manner as compensation
16 of a guardian of an estate under Section 665 of this code.

17 (b) The trust may provide that a trustee make a
18 distribution, payment, use, or application of trust funds for the
19 health, education, support, or maintenance of the ward or
20 incapacitated person or of another person whom the ward or
21 incapacitated person is legally obligated to support, as necessary
22 and without the intervention of a guardian or other representative
23 of the ward or of a representative of the incapacitated person, to:

24 (1) the ward's guardian;

25 (2) a person who has physical custody of the ward or
26 incapacitated person or another person whom the ward or
27 incapacitated person is legally obligated to support; or

1 (3) a person providing a good or service to the ward or
2 incapacitated person or another person whom the ward or
3 incapacitated person is legally obligated to support.

4 (d) When creating or modifying a trust, the court may omit
5 or modify terms required by Subsection (a)(1) or (2) of this section
6 only if the court determines that the omission or modification:

7 (1) is necessary and appropriate for the ward or
8 incapacitated person to be eligible to receive public benefits or
9 assistance under a state or federal program that is not otherwise
10 available to the ward or incapacitated person; and

11 (2) is in the ward's or incapacitated person's best
12 interests.

13 (f) If the trustee determines that it is in the best
14 interest of the ward or incapacitated person, the trustee may
15 invest funds of the trust in the Texas tomorrow fund established by
16 Subchapter F, Chapter 54, Education Code.

17 SECTION 4. Section 869(b), Texas Probate Code, is amended
18 to read as follows:

19 (b) The ward or guardian of the ward's estate or the
20 incapacitated person, as applicable, may not revoke the trust.

21 SECTION 5. Section 869C, Texas Probate Code, is amended to
22 read as follows:

23 Sec. 869C. JURISDICTION OVER TRUST MATTERS. A court that
24 creates a trust under Section 867 of this code has the same
25 jurisdiction to hear matters relating to the trust as the court has
26 with respect to [~~the~~] guardianship and other matters covered by
27 this chapter.

1 SECTION 6. Section 870, Texas Probate Code, is amended to
2 read as follows:

3 Sec. 870. TERMINATION OF TRUST. (a) If the ward or
4 incapacitated person is a minor, the trust terminates:

5 (1) on the death of the ward or incapacitated person or
6 the ward's or incapacitated person's 18th birthday, whichever is
7 earlier; or

8 (2) on the date provided by court order which may not
9 be later than the ward's or incapacitated person's 25th birthday.

10 (b) If the ward or incapacitated person is not [~~an~~
11 ~~incapacitated person other than~~] a minor, the trust terminates on
12 the date the court determines that continuing the trust is no longer
13 in the ward's or incapacitated person's best interests or on the
14 death of the ward or incapacitated person.

15 SECTION 7. Section 871(b), Texas Probate Code, is amended
16 to read as follows:

17 (b) If a trust has been created under this section for a
18 ward, the [~~The~~] trustee shall provide a copy of the annual account
19 to the guardian of the ward's estate or person.

20 SECTION 8. Section 873, Texas Probate Code, is amended to
21 read as follows:

22 Sec. 873. DISTRIBUTION OF TRUST PROPERTY. Unless otherwise
23 provided by the court, the trustee shall:

24 (1) prepare a final account in the same form and manner
25 that is required of a guardian under Section 749 of this code; and

26 (2) on court approval, distribute the principal or any
27 undistributed income of the trust:

1 (A) to the ward or incapacitated person when the
2 trust terminates on its own terms;

3 (B) to the successor trustee on appointment of a
4 successor trustee; or

5 (C) to the representative of the deceased ward's
6 or incapacitated person's estate on the ward's or incapacitated
7 person's death.

8 SECTION 9. This Act applies only to an application for the
9 creation of a trust filed on or after the effective date of this
10 Act. An application for the creation of a trust filed before the
11 effective date of this Act is governed by the law in effect when the
12 application was filed, and the former law is continued in effect for
13 that purpose.

14 SECTION 10. This Act takes effect September 1, 2005.