

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

Action: Do Pass

Vote: 8 - 0 - 1

Yeas: Boone, Cowan, Dembrow, Freeman, Huffman, Maurer, VanOrman, Tomei

Nays: 0

Exc.: Olson

Prepared By: Keely West, Administrator

Meeting Dates: 2/23, 3/11

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Expands language to require an investigation when there is certainty that an injury is the result of abuse. Expands the definition of an “evaluating official” and links it to statute. Allows Department of Justice to require by rule the submission of information in funding applications for regional assessment centers. Allows Department of Justice to provide compensation for medical examinations required under “Karly’s Law.”

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- State of Oregon is the payor of last resort

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: In 2004, 46,524 child abuse or neglect reports were investigated by the Department of Human Services (DHS). Of those reports 7,307 were declared “founded”, which means there was reasonable cause for authorities to believe that abuse or neglect occurred. In 2005, 18 Oregon children died from abuse or neglect by a parent or caregiver. One of them was Karly Sheehan. The 2007 Legislative Assembly enacted ORS 419B.023 and 419B.024, collectively known as “Karly’s Law”, in an effort to prevent similar events in the future.

“Karly’s Law” requires any person who observes that a child has suffered suspicious physical injury while investigating an allegation of abuse must immediately photograph the injuries. County child abuse multidisciplinary teams (consisting of law enforcement, DHS representatives, prosecutors, school officials and others) identify a designated medical professional who is trained and available to conduct medical assessments in cases of suspicious physical injury. When a suspicious physical injury is observed in the course of an investigation a medical assessment must be conducted by a designated medical professional within 48 hours. Medical assessments by specially trained professionals find abuse that might be missed by other professionals. Assessments and photographs are used to support findings and prosecutions of abuse.

HB 2449 adds language to ORS 419B.023 requiring that children who have been positively identified as abuse victims receive medical assessments in the event a suspicious physical injury is observed.