

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued

Action:	Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed and Be Referred to the Committee on Ways and Means by prior reference
Vote:	5 - 3 - 0
Yeas:	Frederick, Greenlick, Harker, Gilliam, Tomei
Nays:	Parrish, Thompson, Weidner
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Jennifer Kellar, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	3/16, 4/11, 4/13

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Directs Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide to Legislative Assembly a racial impact statement for legislative measures impacting child welfare clients in Oregon; child welfare data about race and ethnicity; and require child welfare contractors to use percentage of their contracted funds from DHS for racial or ethnic populations that equals the percentage of racial or ethnic population served by the contract. Stipulates, that when appropriate, DHS may identify race and ethnicity of children that receive child welfare services from an independent contractor, public or private entity which receives funds for services under a contract with DHS. Requires DHS to purchase culturally specific services from the independent contractor, public or private entity that is under contract with DHS in order to provide child welfare services that reflect the racial or ethnic population of the children served.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Final Report of the Governor’s Task Force on Disproportionality in Child Welfare
- Overrepresentation of children, families and communities of color in Oregon’s foster care system
- Data indicating foster care in Oregon is used more often and for longer periods of time for African American and American Indian/Alaskan native children than for Caucasian children
- Recommendations of Governor’s Task Force
- Role of racism (interpersonal, institutional, systemic) in the overrepresentation of children of color in foster care
- Historical and social impact of race on policy development and decision making
- Internal changes and external accountability processes for DHS to assure protections for children of color
- Priorities for DHS changes, to include: policy-making; data-based decision-making; community capacity building; workforce development; legislative; and accountability
- Institutionalization of some recommendations made by Governor’s Task Force
- Foster care statistics
- Cost/benefit ratio evaluation
- Unintended impacts which disproportionately penalize or negatively affect communities of color
- Substantial demographic ethnic population changes in Oregon over last ten years
- Personal accounts of foster care experiences

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Clarifies the initial intent for Section 3 of the measure by stipulating, that when appropriate, DHS may identify race and ethnicity of children that receive child welfare services from an independent contractor, public or private entity which receives funds for services under a contract with DHS. Requires DHS to purchase culturally specific services from the independent contractor, public or private entity that is under contract with DHS in order to provide child welfare services that reflect the racial or ethnic population of the children served.

BACKGROUND: Each year over the past five years, an average of 4,992 Oregon children were removed from their families as a result of abuse or neglect. Native American children in Oregon entered foster care at a rate 4.4 times higher than would be expected given the number of Native American children in the general population. African American

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This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.

children in Oregon entered foster care at a rate of 3.1 times higher than would be expected given the number of African American children in the general population.

On February 11, 2009, the Governor issued Executive Order No. 09-02 establishing a Child Welfare Equity Task Force composed of leaders from across the state. The Task Force was charged with submitting a report and recommendations to significantly reduce and eventually eliminate racial disproportionality in the child welfare system.