

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

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<b>Action:</b>	Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed
<b>Vote:</b>	7 - 0 - 3
<b>Yeas:</b>	Nolan, Schaufler, Tomei, Wand, Whisnant, Barker, Krieger
<b>Nays:</b>	0
<b>Exc.:</b>	Garrett, Hicks, Olson
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Bill Taylor, Counsel
<b>Meeting Dates:</b>	2/4, 3/18

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:** Gives Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) the power to consult with as well as inspect and copy the records of the child that are in the possession of any agency, hospital, school organization, doctor, nurse psychologist, psychiatrist, police department or mental health clinic.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- 4,300 kids benefit from special advocates
- 1,800 CASAs in Oregon
- Average case lasts two years

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:** Clarifies that hospitals, doctors, nurses and certain state agencies may consult with the court appointed special advocate.

**BACKGROUND:** The State of Oregon has the right, if not the duty, to protect the children of Oregon from abuse and neglect. It stands in the place of the parents and its powers and duties are set forth in ORS Chapter 419B.

When a child is before a court under ORS Chapter 419B, the court must appoint a special advocate (CASA) for the child. The CASA's duties include: 1. Investigate all relevant information about the case; 2. Advocate for the child; 3. Monitor all court orders; and, 4. Facilitate and negotiate to ensure that the court, the Department of Human Services and the child's attorney fulfill his or her respective obligations to the child. CASAs have the right to inspect and copy the records of the child in possession of any agency, hospital, school organization, doctor, nurse, psychologist, psychiatrist, police department or mental health clinic. Currently, CASAs do not have the authority to consult with these people regarding the records of the child.