

To: The House Committee on General Government and Consumer Protection  
From: Sara Dinneen

In support of creating efficiency in state government in regard to duplication of background checks, I offer the following testimony on behalf of myself about my experiences with obtaining background checks as a resident of Eugene, OR in Lane County.

I am for the passing of House Bill 4091, which would create a working group to develop recommendations for creating a single system for performing criminal records checks on those individuals who engage in activities that require licensing by the state of Oregon.

I recommend that the criminal records check process be made more streamlined and cost-effective. It makes sense for there to be one system for performing background checks, as opposed to each government organization/agency having their own systems that do not share information or costs.

I work in an early intervention program at the University of Oregon as a teacher. I was originally employed there in 2007 and underwent a background check, including an FBI fingerprint search as I had worked in a different state in the preceding 18 months. I also was registered with the Childcare Division Background Registry. That same year, I started providing childcare to the children of a co-worker at my agency, whose older son was a student in my classroom as well. I have continued to provide childcare to this family for the last 4 years. The child that was originally in my class has since moved on to attend a public elementary school.

In the fall of 2010, I resigned my teaching position to enroll full-time in an early intervention teaching masters degree program at the University of Oregon, continuing to do substitute teaching as needed for the original agency. As part of my enrollment in the graduate program, I needed to be fingerprinted in order to provide the school with a new criminal record check, doing so in the late summer of 2010 as I was, in addition to my substitute work, working in practicum and student teaching placements at various educational settings. Upon receiving my masters degree and Oregon teaching certificate in August 2011, I was rehired as a full-time teacher in her original early childhood program. Because all these positions and experiences were under the same entity, University of Oregon, my renewal status covered the background check requirements for being hired by this agency.

In the fall of 2011 I also applied to provide behavioral consultation services through Lane County DD Services to the child I was providing private childcare to, at the request of his family. At that time, I had to pay for and undergo the DHS background check, including fingerprinting, because this employment was through a different government agency. I was quite confused when, a year after I had previously been fingerprinted, I needed to go through the process again. I had been under the impression that my fingerprints were already on record; I wasn't aware that each government agency has their own process and are unable or unwilling to share information with each other. How can my fingerprints be scanned into a computer, but inaccessible one year later? I thought the whole idea of updating and modernizing the process of fingerprinting was to create less work and to have all immediately in the system to access as needed. Of course, the irony is that I had worked continuously with this same child every week for 4 years and had been employed by a state funded agency the entire time also. As a result, I had delays in being able to provide and be paid for services this child needs and both I and the State of Oregon have incurred additional costs.

I fully support all your efforts to create a more logical, less duplicative and more timely system for protecting our vulnerable populations by the passing of House Bill 4091. Thank you so much for your time and willingness to hear my story,

Sincerely,

Sara Dinneen