



STATE SENATE
DISTRICT 25

Testimony Supporting SB 601
Senate Committee on Health Care and Human Services
March 5, 2012

Good afternoon Chair and members of the committee. I am State Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson and represent Gresham, Troutdale, Wood Village, and Fairview, and I am here in support of SB 1556.

Our children are the most important things in our lives and we should not have barriers that will prevent them from getting the health care and education that they need.

For children not living with their parents, or whose parents are unable to care for them, 41 states and Washington, DC allow caregivers to enroll them in school or make health care decisions on their behalf even though they are not legal guardians.

More and more children are living with their grandparents or other relatives

Oregon is only one of six states that do not have a medical or education consent law.

Children come to live with grandparents and other relatives for a variety of reason, the most common ones being parents who abuse drugs or alcohol, suffer from mental illness or AIDS, abuse or neglect their children, or are in prison or deployed overseas.

Making decisions on children's medical, educational and emotional needs can be difficult without legal custody or guardianship.

I run into so many people my age that are raising their grandchildren. My neighbors are raising their grandchildren but won't talk about their grandchildren's parents. We need to make sure that we don't have barriers in case a relative needs to get medical, mental, dental care for them. Also we should make it easy for kids to get into school.

A relative caregiver providing consent is liable to health care provider or school for payment for any medical treatment or education services. But it still does not relieve the legal parent or guardian of liability for payment for medical treatment or education services.

A relative caregiver is not subject to criminal liability, civil liability or professional disciplinary action for providing the medical treatment or educational services.

