

Joint Committee on Ways and Means

Carrier – House: Rep. Keny-Guyer  
Carriers – Senate: Sen. Winters  
Sen. Shields

**Revenue:** No revenue impact

**Fiscal:** Fiscal statement issued

---

**Action:** Do Pass the A-Engrossed Measure

**Vote:** 24 – 0 – 2

House

Yeas: Buckley, Frederick, Freeman, Hanna, Huffman, Jenson, Komp, McLane, Nathanson, Richardson, Smith, Tomei, Williamson

Nays:

Exc: Barker, Read

Senate

Yeas: Bates, Devlin, Edwards, Girod, Hansell, Johnson, Monroe, Steiner Hayward, Thomsen, Whitsett, Winters

Nays:

Exc:

**Prepared By:** Laurie Byerly, Legislative Fiscal Office

**Meeting Date:** June 6, 2013

---

**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:** Requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to establish the Oregon Foster Children’s Bill of Rights. Requires DHS must ensure that each foster child has certain essential rights including (1) the ability to complain about unsatisfactory or inappropriate care and placement services without fear of retaliation; (2) transportation to court and citizen review board hearings; and age-appropriate, up-to-date written information regarding how and to whom the foster child may contact with complaints. Requires DHS to establish a hotline for foster children to make complaints regarding their care, safety, and well-being. Requires the agency to provide a transition toolkit to children 14 years or older.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Need for foster youth to know their rights and have a safe place to call regarding violation of rights
- History of various ombudsman positions/roles in state government
- Location of Governor’s Advocacy Office and ability of office to maintain integrity and independence

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:** No amendment.

**BACKGROUND:** In July 2012, the Oregon Foster Youth Connection, a program of the nonprofit child advocacy organization Children First for Oregon, held a three-day policy-focused foster youth summit. During the summit, foster youth identified the need for the state of Oregon to guarantee their basic rights while in state care. On the final day of the summit, a group of 30 current and former foster youth from around the state presented a set of policy recommendations that included the adoption and promotion of an Oregon Foster Children’s Bill of Rights. The bill seeks to ensure that rights to things like clothes that fit, proper nutrition, contact with their siblings, and their safety are communicated to foster youth and substitute care providers, and that foster youth have a safe means to report violations, via hotline.