



Oregon Juvenile Department Directors Association

Representing Oregon's County Juvenile Departments

www.ojdda.org

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Support SB 618 to remove barriers for homeless youth

The Oregon Juvenile Department Director's Association would like to provide support for the passage of SB 618 as an opportunity to remove a huge barrier for many of the youth we come into contact with. For youth who have a long list of barriers in their lives, building from a very young age, difficulty obtaining a state issued identity card is just one more thing to fight against as they try to better themselves through education and gainful employment. Many of these youth come from situations where trauma has been a part of their lives; poverty, homelessness, households where drugs and alcohol were readily available and abuse from the hands of adults who are supposed to be protectors.

These youth move often. It is not unusual for many possessions to get left behind as they hastily move without planning. Many families in Oregon have a safe in their home to keep important paperwork that will be essential as children grow into young adults and need documentation to get things like a job or a driver's license. The families we are talking about don't have a safe and may be disorganized based upon middle class standards. Paperwork such as birth certificates and social security cards are left behind, lost or stolen when families frequently change residences or locations. Youth sometimes leave their homes for various reasons which include escaping from some of the traumas inflicted upon them by adults, taking paperwork with them is not a top priority. As these youth get older those two critical documents are their keys to a better life. Getting a driver's license, or just an Oregon Identification Card helps remove the barrier for youth getting a job or into educational programs.

Providing the ability for agencies to work with this population to obtain critical documentation is essential in helping these youth be successful in our state.

Torri Lynn

OJDDA President-Elect