

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Human Services and Early Childhood

Fiscal: No Fiscal Impact

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 05/26/15

Action: Do Pass With Amendments To The A-Eng Bill. (Printed B-Eng.)

Meeting Dates: 05/07, 05/26

Vote:

Yeas: 5 - Dembrow, Gelser, Kruse, Monnes Anderson, Olsen

Prepared By: Cheyenne Ross, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Department of Human Services to provide for participation in extracurricular activities for children in its care, in coordination with agencies and foster parents. Defines “extracurricular activities.” Defines “reasonable and prudent parenting standards.”

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Extracurricular activities multiply a young person’s connections to others and broadens social supports
- Friends made through extracurricular activities
- Memories created through participation in extracurricular activities
- Development of confidence; skill-building
- All that can be learned from being part of a team and healthy competition
- Same opportunities to participate as anyone else

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Specifies youth chooses activity. Clarifies summer camp or church activities alone do not constitute extracurricular activity. Changes “church activities” to “religious services.”

BACKGROUND:

House Bill 2890-B is brought by the Oregon Foster Youth Connection (OFYC), a statewide, youth-led, advocacy group of current and former foster youth between the ages of 14 and 25. Through advocacy work with OFYC, participating youth become actively engaged in civic process.

More than 8,000 children are currently in the foster care system in Oregon. For those who are school aged, access to extracurricular activities is not always possible due to a variety of barriers, including fees and transportation. Activities such as drama, sports, music, debate, fine arts, science club, student government, and others, do not merely add to a child’s educational and social experience, but are critical to overall physical, social, emotional, and academic development. Extracurricular activities are also important avenues for exploration and self-expression.

House Bill 2890-B directs the Department of Human Services to allow for and support foster youth participation in developmentally-appropriate extracurricular activities.