

HB 2171 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Judiciary

Prepared By: Channa Newell, Counsel

Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 3/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Oregon Volunteers Commission for Voluntary Action and Services to maintain Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteers at levels sufficient to appoint CASA in each juvenile dependency case at caseloads of no more than 45 individual cases per volunteer. Requires supervisor in program to supervisor no more than 30 CASA volunteers at a time. Appropriates moneys for compliance with provisions of measure. Declares emergency; effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Nearly 1900 individuals volunteered in 2015-2016 to advocate for children in Oregon's juvenile dependency system. These volunteers are called Court Appointed Special Advocates, or CASAs. As the name implies, CASAs are appointed by a court and provide a voice for the needs and desires of the children they represent. CASAs engage in the legal proceedings involving the child they represent and may make recommendations to the court. There are 26 individual CASA programs in Oregon serving 35 counties.

House Bill 2171 requires CASA volunteer programs to maintain a volunteer base large enough to appoint a CASA for each juvenile dependency proceeding and to meet the standards set out by the National CASA Association, which is to have no more than one supervisor per 30 CASAs and no more than 45 cases per CASA.