

Catholic Community Services

*We champion the positive development of children and adults,
strengthen families and build community.*

April 5, 2017

**Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward & Representative Dan Rayfield, Co-Chairs
Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services**

Re: Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Welfare Budget Testimony

Members of the Committee:

For the record my name is Jim Seymour. I am the executive director of Catholic Community Services (CCS) and of Catholic Community Services Foundation (CCSF). CCS is a nationally accredited, faith-based, social service organization that serves more than 2,000 children, adults, and families facing adversity every day. CCSF raises money for CCS programs and provides affordable housing for more than 1,000 low income children and adults every day.

I am writing to urge your continued support of the DHS Strengthening Preserving and Reuniting Families (SPRF) program.

Oregon State Senator Alan Bates worked tirelessly in support of 2011's SB 964, the legislation that authorized the SPRF program. The bill was drafted after Doctor Bates and his wife, Laurie, hosted several meetings in their living room with local leaders, advocates, service providers and parents that needed help.

The goal of the SPRF program is to foster collaboration between state and community programs to help Oregon children at imminent risk of entering foster care to remain safely with their families, and it is working very well in Marion County.

In Marion County, SPRF is a partnership with Catholic Community Services' Fostering Hope Initiative and DHS. It offers a unique, intensive treatment program for families who are struggling with the challenges of substance abuse and reduces the number of children placed in foster care. In collaboration with Marion County Health, Children's Behavioral Health, Adult Behavioral Health, Alcohol and Drug and Professional Peer Mentors, comprehensive counseling and support services are provided in a healthy, nurturing treatment community with safe, stable housing and child care. This comprehensive, therapeutic environment results in:

- Increased safety and well-being of children,
- Reduced number of children who enter foster care,
- Increased number of children reunified with their families,
- Improved educational and social emotional outcomes for children,
- Strong, resilient families who help build healthy communities, and
- Reduced cost

Respectfully Submitted,



James T. Seymour

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