



April 5, 2017

Oregon House Human Services Committee
Re: HB 2903

Dear Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice Chair Olson, Vice Chair Sanchez, and Committee Members:

I am the Executive Director of a nonprofit child-caring agency in Salem, Christian Community Placement Center (CCPC). We have worked with at-risk youth and their families in Oregon for over 29 years. It is CCPC's desire to partner with you as we work through this year's legislative session.

CCPC's mission is to provide a safe place where youth can heal from past trauma in their lives, recover from destructive behaviors (such as suicide attempts, self-harm, and addictions), develop skills that will assist them in graduating from high school, and prepare them for independent living and job readiness. We work in therapeutic foster care, mentoring, residential services, and mental health counseling. CCPC works not only with the youth but also with their families. Our efforts include reunifying families whenever possible. This work is essential in providing important services to some of Oregon's most vulnerable residents.

We are concerned about the impact of last year's regulatory changes. Although we have not had a substantiated finding during our recent investigations, SB 1515 has changed the culture wherein investigations take place. CCPC has already lost one foster home due to the stress around the process, and several staff are beginning to question whether it is worth the risk to work in a system that requires 100% compliance with no room for unintended mistakes. For these and other reasons, we are encouraged by the efforts being made to advance HB 2903.

HB 2903 focuses on three critical actions that will improve child safety outcomes:

- Increases strategies available to the DHS to address child safety and accountability.
- Creates prioritization, or triage, for the most concerning events.
- Builds greater competency for sustaining safe environments in provider organizations.

Please support HB 2903. We need these tools to reach our safety goals. We are grateful that you are hearing this bill.

Thank you,

Debby Lute
Executive Director
503-507-7185
Debby.Lute@ccpcusa.com