



POLK COUNTY

POLK COUNTY COURTHOUSE * DALLAS, OREGON 97338-3177
CRIMINAL DIVISION * (503) 623-9268
SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT * (503) 623-9269
VICTIM ASSISTANCE * (503) 623-9268
FAX * (503) 623-7556

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

AARON FELTON
District Attorney
felton.aaron@co.polk.or.us



April 5, 2017

Hon. Chair John Lively
Hon. Vice-Chair Jodi Hack
Hon. Vice-Chair Carla Piluso
Members of the House Committee on
Early Childhood and Family Supports

Re: HB 3067-2

Dear Chair Lively, Vice-Chair Hack, Vice Chair Piluso, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in support of HB 3067-2, which establishes a CourtCare pilot program in Polk and Marion counties to provide a safe and nurturing place for children to receive while their parents or guardians attend court proceedings or other court-related business.

As District Attorney, I have participated in numerous proceedings in which parents, whether due to financial or other circumstances, have had to bring their young children with them to court. The issues discussed in open court can be very trauma-inducing and wholly inappropriate for children to hear. Unfortunately, due to lack of child care for these parents, their children are forced to remain in the courtroom or sit unattended in the hallway while court proceeds. CourtCare would provide an opportunity for children and families facing these circumstances to receive quality child care in a safe environment while their parents or guardians are conducting court business.

In my experience, one of the most common obstacles people face in meeting their conditions of probation or other court-ordered obligations is the lack of available, affordable, child care. As a prosecutor, I have a responsibility not only to seek justice by holding offenders accountable, but to be supportive of those individuals that are honestly working to be accountable by removing unnecessary roadblocks. HB 3067-2 is a positive step in removing at least one of those roadblocks.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Aaron Felton
District Attorney