



*Transforming the practice of law and ensuring justice and equality by
advancing women and minorities in the legal profession.*

April 5, 2017

House Committee on Early Childhood and Family Supports
2017 Oregon State Legislature

Re: HB 3067

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

The Mary Leonard Chapter of Oregon Women Lawyers (OWLS) writes in support of HB 3067, which will establish a Court Care program to provide a safe place for children while parents or guardians attend court proceedings or conduct court-related business in Marion and Polk counties.

OWLS Mary Leonard Chapter services the mid-Willamette Valley as part of a statewide legal professional organization dedicated to transforming the practice of law and ensuring justice and equality by advancing women and minorities in the legal profession. OWLS Mary Leonard Chapter sponsors continuing legal education, professional networking, and fundraiser events for local organizations that align with our mission. In 2016 we donated all of the proceeds from our Monte Carlo Casino Night fundraiser, \$3,295.58, toward establishing a Court Care program in Marion County. However, this and similar efforts to raise funds do not stretch far enough to implement this important program.

HB 3067 will provide the initial funding needed to open the doors to childcare facilities in Marion and Polk counties. It will improve access to justice for low-income families and protect children from witnessing traumatic court proceedings while litigants, advocates, and court staff give their full attention to court business. Lack of affordable, quality childcare should not prevent parents and caregivers from complying with mandatory court appearances, obtaining a restraining order, challenging an eviction, or exercising other legal rights. The Court Care program established by HB 3067 will provide necessary childcare to allow parents and caregivers to access the courts.

For these reasons, OWLS Mary Leonard Chapter encourages you to pass HB 3067. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Hamilton, President
OWLS Mary Leonard Chapter
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