



Marion County

OREGON

Board of Commissioners

(503) 588-5212
(503) 588-5237-FAX

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Sam Brentano
Janet Carlson
Kevin Cameron

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

John Lattimer

April 3, 2017

Representative John Lively, Chair
House Committee on Early Childhood and Family Supports
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support HB 3067 with Amendments

Dear Chair Lively and Committee Members:

The Marion County Board of Commissioners strongly urges your support of the proposed amendments to HB 3067 creating a pilot CourtCare program to be located in the Marion and Polk county courthouses.

CourtCare will offer free, licensed, quality care for children of caregivers who must attend legal proceedings or complete paperwork at either the Marion or Polk courthouse. Currently, children brought to the courthouse are either allowed to remain in courtrooms or asked to sit unattended in hallways. In the courtroom, children are exposed to upset adults in conflict situations, language involving family violence and criminal behavior, and sometimes witness parents being taken into custody.

In the fall of 2015, Marion County enlisted Alliance for HOPE International to evaluate Marion County's system of victim services, involving the circuit court, Center for Hope and Safety, Liberty House (child abuse assessment center) and Marion County District Attorney's Office Victim Services Division. Mr. Casey Gwinn, Alliance for HOPE International president, led the evaluation team. While Marion County has a reputation for strong collaborations and high quality services for victims, we found there were victims who fell through the cracks.

The Alliance team encountered a frightening situation while observing a circuit court hearing. A woman who was requesting a restraining order said that her ex-husband, a veteran who had done five tours of duty in Iraq and suffered from PTSD, showed up on her doorstep, unannounced, asking for a place to stay. The woman said she told him that he could stay, but only if he first sought psychiatric services. The veteran was then admitted to the hospital, but released after a few hours. The woman no longer knew his whereabouts and said she feared for her safety, since her ex-husband had

Page 2
April 3, 2017
Representative John Lively, Chair
Support HB 3067 with Amendments

twice strangled her until she was unconscious. In granting the restraining order, the judge asked if the woman had created a safety plan and urged her several times to connect with advocates from the Center for Hope and Safety. The woman declined, noting that she had been waiting at the court since morning to fill out the paperwork and attend the hearing and had left her children at home alone all day. She needed to quickly return home and said she couldn't afford to take the time to meet with an advocate.

Fortunately, the Alliance team was able to follow up with this woman during a ride-along with the Salem PD that same evening, check on her safety and offer her resources. However, this story offers a poignant example of the difficult choices people who are in harm's way must make when child care is not readily available.

Since the Alliance evaluation report was released, Marion County has implemented a number of service improvements for crime victims. However, gaps still exist, one of which is child care in the courts. Jurisdictions such as Multnomah County that already have CourtCare have found it a vital resource for protecting children and a key to ensuring access to justice for low-income families needing assistance to exercise their legal rights. CourtCare reduces court disruptions and the number of proceedings that need to be rescheduled.

As per the amendments to HB 3067, it should be noted that both Marion and Polk county courts would house, but not operate, the CourtCare program. The program would be funded, managed and administered by a non-profit entity.

The Marion County Board of Commissioners urges your support of HB 3067 as amended.

Sincerely,

MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Samuel A. Brentano, Chair



Janet Carlson, Vice Chair



Kevin Cameron, Commissioner



CLINICAL LAW PROGRAM
Warren Binford
Professor of Law
Director, Clinical Law Program
245 Winter St. SE, Salem, OR 97301
Phone: (503) 370-6758
Fax: (503) 375-5433
Email: wbinford@willamette.edu
June 1, 2017

Senator Jackie Winters
Co-Chair, Ways and Means -- Public Safety Subcommittee
900 Court St. NE, S-301
Salem, OR 97301

Representative Duane Stark
Co-Chair, Ways and Means -- Public Safety Subcommittee
900 Court St. NE, H-372
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 3067

Dear Senator Winters and Representative Stark:

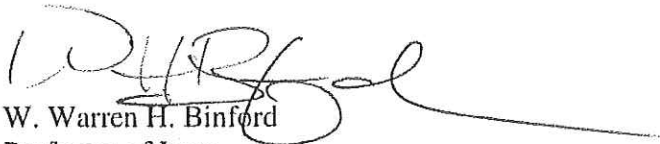
In 2005, I founded Willamette University's Child & Family Advocacy Clinic. We provide free legal services to families of limited means who are seeking adoptions and guardianships, as well as those trying to escape domestic violence or simply working to reconfigure their families peacefully through court processes such as divorce and custody decisions. The first thing we did when building the clinic was create a safe and developmentally appropriate place for children to play onsite while their parents are meeting with our law students and faculty. As someone with a master's degree in early childhood education, I am familiar with the research showing that high quality childcare can have a profound, positive impact on a child's life and should be viewed as an investment in the future of that child and society.

Thus, I was shocked when I arrived in Salem and discovered that there was no childcare provided in the local courthouses. Given my background, I had always made a point of visiting the childcare centers in the courthouses where I appeared as either an attorney or a CASA and so I knew they existed and always noted their popularity. Seeing the playful joy on the children's faces contrasted with the heavy emotion on the faces of the parents always reminded me of the tremendous need for onsite care. Many of the children in court-involved families have already witnessed or experienced conflict in their lives and it is critical that society convey to children that they are welcome, safe, and supported by their community. Moreover, onsite care enables the parent with primary caregiver responsibilities to appear in court and assert or defend the rights of their children and themselves without having to place their children's safety at risk by, for example, placing the child in a private setting with a friend or neighbor during court appearances. (I work with sex abuse survivors and so am familiar with the protections that high-quality group childcare can provide with regard to abuse and exploitation.) I was thrilled when I learned recently that support was being sought to expand the CourtCare program and pilot CourtCare centers in Marion and Polk Counties.

A CourtCare center in both courthouses could make the difference in enabling our Child and Family Advocacy Clinic clients to attend court and know that their children are safe and in a developmentally appropriate environment nearby. Thus, I ask you to support HB 3067 and allow us to pilot the CourtCare program here in our local courthouses.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me directly. I am just across the street and stand willing to support your effort to move this bill forward so that our community's children are safe and well-cared for during one of the most critical periods in their families' lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'W. Warren H. Binford', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

W. Warren H. Binford
Professor of Law
Director, Clinical Law Program



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



June 2, 2017

Hon. Sen. Jackie Winters, Co-Chair
Hon. Rep. Duane Stark, Co-Chair
Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Sub-Committee on Public Safety

Re HB 3067-2

Dear Co-Chair Winters, Co-Chair Stark, and Members of the Sub-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 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 their 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 working to be successful by removing unnecessary roadblocks. HB 3067-2 is a positive step in that direction.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Aaron Felton
District Attorney



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

June 1, 2017

Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety
2017 Oregon State Legislature

Re: HB 3067

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Jackie Winters and Representative Duane Stark 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, \$4,500, toward establishing a Court Care program in Marion County. While
this and similar efforts are helpful and demonstrate community support the funds do not
stretch far enough to implement and sustain 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
PO Box 773
Salem, OR 97308



POLK COUNTY

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

POLK COUNTY COURTHOUSE * DALLAS, OREGON 97338-3174
(503) 623-8173 * FAX (503) 623-0896

Commissioners
CRAIG A. POPE
MIKE AINSWORTH
JENNIFER L. WHEELER

GREGORY P. HANSEN
Administrative Officer

June 2, 2017

Senator Jackie Winters, Co-Chair
Representative Duane Stark, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support HB 3067

Dear Senator Winters, Representative Stark and Committee Members:

The Polk County Board of Commissioners strongly urges your support of the proposed amendments to HB 3067 creating a pilot CourtCare program to be located in the Marion and Polk county courthouses.

CourtCare will offer free, licensed, quality care for children of caregivers who must attend legal proceedings or complete paperwork at either the Marion or Polk courthouse. Currently, children brought to the courthouse are either allowed to remain in courtrooms or asked to sit unattended in hallways. Neither option is a good one for children who need a safe and nurturing environment. In the courtroom, children are exposed to upset adults in conflict situations, language involving family violence and criminal behavior, and sometimes witness parents being taken into custody. The Court Care program established by HB 3067 will protect children from witnessing traumatic court proceedings and will allow litigants, advocates, and court staff to give their full attention to court business.

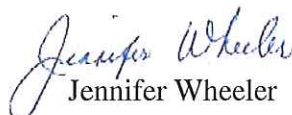
The lack of affordable, quality childcare should not prevent parents and caregivers from complying with mandatory court appearances, obtaining a restraining order, challenging an eviction, or exercising their other legal rights. The Court Care program established by HB 3067 will provide necessary childcare to allow parents and caregivers to access the courts.

As per the amendments to HB 3067, it should be noted that both Marion and Polk County would house, but not operate, the CourtCare program. The program would be funded, managed and administered by a non-profit entity.

The Polk County Board of Commissioners urges your support of HB 3067 as amended.

Sincerely,
POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS


Craig Pope


Jennifer Wheeler


Mike Ainsworth



COMMUNITY ACTION

2475 Center St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Ph. 503-585-6232
Fax 503-375-7580
www.mycommunityaction.org

**HELPING PEOPLE
CHANGING LIVES**

June 1, 2017

Joint Committee Of Ways and Means Subcommittee On Public Safety

2017 Oregon State Legislature

Re: HB 3067

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Jackie Winters and Representative Duane Stark and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jon Reeves and I am writing to educate you on the benefits of HB 3067, which will establish a Court Care program that provides a safe and nurturing place for children while parents or guardians attend court proceedings or conduct court-related business in Marion and Polk counties. The Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency, Inc.'s primary responsibility is to help people exit poverty. Many of the families and individuals that we serve struggle with rent and child care cost burden which requires them to make hard choices about meeting their basic needs vs. having a roof over their heads. Attending legal proceedings and advocating for their rights may carry significant barriers to their participation on top of an unreal amount of life stress that compounds their compliance and frankly paralyzes them from moving forward in a tangible way.

Currently, children who are brought to the courthouse are either allowed to stay in courtrooms, which exposes them to the ugly details that can accompany legal proceedings, or they are asked to sit in the hallways unattended. Neither option is a good one for children who need a safe and nurturing environment in order avoid trauma that exposure to adult issues might inflict. The Court Care program established by HB 3067 will protect children from witnessing traumatic court proceedings and will allow litigants, advocates, and court staff to give their full attention to court business.

Continuing to expect that families can traverse the system while not addressing barriers to their success prevents parents and caregivers from complying with mandatory court appearances, obtaining a restraining order, challenging an eviction, or exercising their other legal rights. The Court Care program established by HB 3067 will provide necessary child care to allow parents and caregivers to access the courts.

Thank you for the work you do on behalf of passing legislation to help our citizens to access needed resources regardless of their economic status.

Sincerely,

Jon Reeves, Executive Director

Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency, Inc.

June 1, 2017

To Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety, Co-Chairs Senator Jackie Winters and Representative Duane Stark,

I am writing this letter in support of Court Care for Polk County. I had to attend multiple court dates for a trial in regards to my son's passing. Unfortunately I was unable to find Child Care for multiple reasons. There were numerous times where I would plan for care and the date would be changed with little notice to me. I had court dates for release hearings and multiple dates leading to the pre-trial, the pretrial was rescheduled multiple times due to different reasons, and through each date set, I was forced to bring my son. The hassle with having to bring my new baby forced me to leave the courtroom many times due to diaper changes, feeding, and just getting fussy. I was forced to miss out on critical information every time I had to leave the room. Along with missing information, I also had to get ready a lot sooner. I had to wake the baby up early, feed him, change him, and sometimes feed him again; the process of getting him ready was sometimes a big hassle.

I was unemployed during these times, so I also could not afford child care and couldn't work around my family's schedule due to dates and times of the court. I had to hold back so much emotion to not upset my son, who was just 5 months old when the court dates began. Not only did I have this beautiful baby to take care of, I was mourning the loss of my first born, who was 15 months old. Having to take my second son to court also caused me to hide my emotions and lengthen my healing process. If there would have been free, licensed care for my son, I would have been able to grieve easier and not be so worried about when I would have to leave the room next. There were points at which there were recordings played, and I was forced to leave the room to take care of my son.

Natalie, an employee with Victim's Assistance, did her best to assist me with my son, but unfortunately sometimes she couldn't help. She did her best effort, but she was also supposed to serve a purpose of emotional support for me, with her stepping out of the room, she was unable to fulfill her job. I appreciate her assistance very much, although I wish she would have been able to sit by me and explain things more as the case went on. If there would have been Court Care during the case that I had to attend, I feel I would have gained so much more knowledge about my son's death and I wouldn't still have questions after a year and a half.

Thank you very much for taking the time to hear my story, and I sincerely hope that soon, there will be Court Care for parents in my situation.

Thank you again,

Heather Davis



Family Building Blocks

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE AND FAMILIES TOGETHER

June 1, 2017

Joint Committee On Ways and Means Sub Committee On
Public Safety

Re: HB 3067

Joint Committee On Ways and Means Sub Committee On Public Safety, Co-Chairs
Senator Jackie Winters and Representative Duane Stark

Family Building Blocks is writing in support of HB 3067, which will establish a Court Care program in Marion and Polk counties. We believe this program is essential to ensuring children are in a safe and nurturing environment while parents or guardians attend court proceedings or conduct court-related business.

Currently, children who are brought to the courthouse are either allowed to stay in courtrooms, which exposes them to the potentially traumatic details that can be disclosed in legal proceedings, or they are asked to sit in the hallways unattended. Neither option is a good one.

The Court Care program established by HB 3067 will solve this problem and protect children from witnessing traumatic court proceedings and will allow litigants, advocates, and court staff to give their full attention to court business.

HB 3067 will also improve access to justice for low-income families. The 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 their other legal rights. The Court Care program established by HB 3067 will provide necessary childcare to allow parents and caregivers to access the courts.

Families served by Family Building Blocks face multiple toxic stressors, such as poverty, incarceration, domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse, and mental illness. Many end up in the court system at some point. Providing vulnerable families dignified access to justice with the assurance that their children will be safe is vital to breaking negative cycles poverty so often creates.

For those reasons, I encourage you to pass HB 3067. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Patrice Alterhofen
Executive Director



Marion County Bar Association

P.O. Box 333
Salem, OR 97308-0333

June 5, 2017

Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Public Safety

Re: House Bill 3067;
June 5, 2017 Hearing

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Winters and Representative Stark and Committee Members:

The Marion County Bar Association writes this letter to stress the need for and importance of access to free childcare for parents or child caretakers who have necessary court business. The MCBA fully supports the CourtCare concept, or a similar concept that will facilitate court access and participation while also protecting children from court proceedings that are not proper for children.

The MCBA generally does not take positions on pending legislation or legislative matters and is not doing so regarding this particular legislation. The MCBA is, however, very aware of the important need to allow parents and child caretakers who are involved in criminal, domestic violence, child custody and other sensitive proceedings to attend those proceedings, providing them with access to our justice system. Simultaneously, the MCBA is very aware of the need to keep children out of the courtroom (unless a child's presence is required) so the court business is not interrupted, the parties in court can focus on the courtroom proceedings without needing to attend to children, and the children are protected from hearing information or testimony that is not appropriate for the children to hear.

The MCBA welcomes any and all efforts to address the need for free childcare for court proceeding participants who also have child caretaking responsibilities.

Sincerely,



Samuel E. Sears
Larimer & Sears LLC
President, Marion County Bar Association

PRESIDENT SAMUEL SEARS
VICE PRESIDENT SHANNON SNOW
PAST PRESIDENT DEBORAH LUSH
SECRETARY RUSS GETCHELL
TREASURER REBECCA HILLYER
BOARD MEMBERS BRIAN LATHEN LARRY LINDER HEATHER VAN METER JOHN CASE ERIN DAWSON
ADM. ASSISTANT KIMBERLY A. TAYLOR



earlylearninghub.org

April 5, 2017

House Committee on Early Childhood and Family Supports

Re: HB 3067

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

As Executive Director of the Marion & Polk Early Learning Hub, I am writing in support of HB 3067 to establish a Court Care Program in Marion and Polk Counties. Should this be funded, we will be able to provide a needed service for children and their families in our community. This will establish the ability to provide a safe and nurturing place for children while parents or guardians attend court related business in Marion and Polk counties.

This program will provide an opportunity to connect with families that may not otherwise be connected with services. In providing a place for children to be in a stress-free and developmentally appropriate environment, it will reduce family stress, and be a much healthier environment than the court room.

In addition this will also allow families, who may not otherwise, be made aware of or connected with important services that are designed to meet the developmental needs of children to be more ready for kindergarten when they arrive; such as, but not limited to Preschool Promise, Head Start, Early Head Start, and Relief Nursery. Families will also have the opportunity to learn about services or resources designed to support family stability.

Families in our communities face a variety of stressors. Our court system is designed for adults to deal with legal proceedings that are challenging and not designed with children in mind. Families often do not have choices or resources for child care and are forced to bring them to the courthouse. The program that HB 3067 establishes will protect children from witnessing court proceedings, and will allow the litigants, court staff, and others associated with the court proceeding to give their full attention in the court procedures.

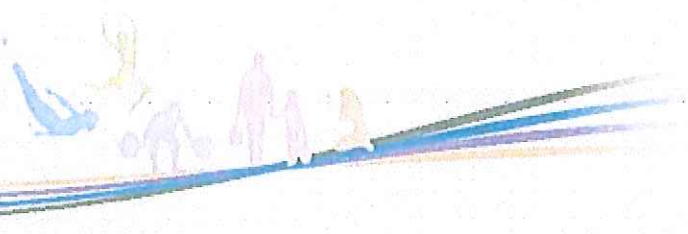
We owe it to our children to be as free as possible from these stressors where they have no voice or choice.

Sincerely,

Lisa Harnisch
Executive Director



RAY & JOAN
KROC
 CORPS COMMUNITY CENTER
 SALEM, OR



WILLIAM BOOTH
Founder
 ANDRÉ COX
General
 KENNETH G. & IOLENE K. HODDER
Territorial Commanders
 MAJORS MICHAEL & JANINE ZIELINSKI
Divisional Leaders
 CAPTAINS DAN & KIM WILLIAMS
Kroc Administration
 County Coordinators
 MAJORS KEVIN & TAMMY RAY
Corps Officers
 MAJORS MOISES & ALICIA GUERRERO
Hispanic Corps Officers

ADVISORY BOARD

Chairman:

HERB SIMS

Vice Chairman:

GREG NELSON

Treasurer:

RYAN DEMPSTER

JOHN CURRIE

TERRENCE GREEN

MATT GAUNTLETT

BILL MAINWARING

MARK MAZZUCA

JAN MORGAN

MICHAEL MORGAN

PAT MOSS

CHRIS RAY

RICHARD SPANGLER

REBECCA STERUP

Life Members:

GEORGE CARLISLE

TOM KAY

Thursday, March 23, 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:

My name is Melissa Baurer, Director of Social Services for The Salvation Army and I am writing in support of HB 3067, which will establish a Court Care program that provides a safe and nurturing place for children while parents or guardians attend court proceedings or conduct court-related business in Marion and Polk counties.

Currently, children who are brought to the courthouse are either allowed to stay in courtrooms, which exposes them to the ugly details that can accompany legal proceedings, or they are asked to sit in the hallways unattended. Neither option is a good one for children who need a safe and nurturing environment in order avoid trauma that exposure to adult issues might inflict. The Court Care program established by HB 3067 will protect children from witnessing traumatic court proceedings and will allow litigants, advocates, and court staff to give their full attention to court business.

HB 3067 will improve access to justice for low-income families. The 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 their other legal rights. The Court Care program established by HB 3067 will provide necessary childcare to allow parents and caregivers to access the courts.

HB 3067 and Mid-Valley Court Care will specifically benefit the families and children we serve. Our office primarily works with families who need help with eviction notices, shut off notices, and parents who are fleeing from domestic violence and need financial support. Often, we hear from families that they did not challenge the eviction because they did not have transportation to get to the court appearance or they did not have the support from family or friends to care for their children while attending court. In addition, we have families come to us who were not able to pay their electrical bill because they owe fines resulting from missed court hearings as they did not appear due to childcare concerns.

For those reasons, I encourage you to pass HB 3067. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Melissa Baurer
 Social Service Director

The Salvation Army SERVING MARION & POLK COUNTIES

Kay D. Toran
President/CEO

Board of Directors

Al Zindel
Chair

Earl Hines
Vice-Chair

Adrienne Livingston
Secretary

John Hairston
Treasurer

Barbara Brainard

Andrae Brown, PhD

Carmen Gaston

Kate Jordan-Downs

Stephen Mocerl

Sunny Radcliffe

Greg Rickman

David Underliner

Bruce Warner

Administration Office

3910 SE Stark Street
Portland, Oregon 97214
Phone: (503) 235-8655
Fax: (503) 239-6233
Web: www.voaoor.org

Volunteers of America Oregon is
an independent 501(c)(3)
charitable organization
registered within the state of
Oregon that provides human
services to populations in need.



Volunteers of America®

OREGON

March 29, 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:

My name is Kay Toran and I am writing in support of HB 3067, which will establish a Court Care program that provides a safe and nurturing place for children while parents or guardians attend court proceedings or conduct court-related business in Marion and Polk counties.

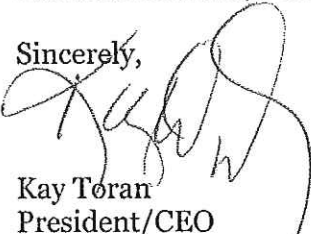
Currently, children who are brought to the courthouse are either allowed to stay in courtrooms, which exposes them to the ugly details that can accompany legal proceedings, or they are asked to sit in the hallways unattended. Neither option is a good one for children who need a safe and nurturing environment in order avoid trauma that exposure to adult issues might inflict. The Court Care program established by HB 3067 will protect children from witnessing traumatic court proceedings and will allow litigants, advocates, and court staff to give their full attention to court business.

HB 3067 will improve access to justice for low-income families. The 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 their other legal rights. The Court Care program established by HB 3067 will provide necessary childcare to allow parents and caregivers to access the courts.

The Multnomah Bar Foundation and Volunteers of America Oregon opened the first CourtCare program at the Multnomah County Court House 15 years ago. This trauma informed program has served over 15,000 children. Families participating in the program not only have a safe place for their child, but they are also provided resources such as food, clothing, housing, treatment, and therapeutic programs for the family. HB 3067 would provide families' access to justice while protecting the children.

Michelle Ward, Program Director for Volunteers of America Oregon will provide detail testimony that reflects our successful Multnomah County CourtCare program.

For those reasons, I encourage you to pass HB 3067. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Kay Toran
President/CEO
Volunteers of America Oregon

There are no limits to caring®



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

March 3, 2017

The House Committee on Early Childhood and Family Supports

Re: CourtCare Program

Committee Members,

I am writing in support of the establishment of a CourtCare program in Marion and Polk Counties that will provide a safe and nurturing place for children while their parents are in the courtroom. Children who are brought into the courts are being exposed to situations that only adults should be involved with. CourtCare is a resource that is vital to the protection of children in our communities and is key in ensuring access to justice for primarily low-income families who need assistance in order to exercise their legal rights. Harsh words, confrontations, possibly even seeing parents in handcuffs -- these are traumatic experiences for young children who have to tag along when family members are involved in court actions.

CourtCare is a compassionate way to protect young children from unneeded and unpleasant courtroom situations. I urge you to support the establishment of a CourtCare program in Marion and Polk Counties.

Sincerely,

Samuel Carroll
CEO
YMCA of Marion and Polk Counties
685 Court Street
Salem, Oregon 97301

2017_5_4

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:

My name is Katherine H. Denning and I am writing in support of HB 3067, which will establish a Court Care program that provides a safe and nurturing place for children while parents or guardians attend court proceedings or conduct court-related business in Marion and Polk counties.

Currently, children who are brought to the courthouse are either allowed to stay in courtrooms, which exposes them to the ugly details that can accompany legal proceedings, or they are asked to sit in the hallways unattended. Neither option is a good one for children who need a safe and nurturing environment in order to avoid trauma that exposure to adult issues might inflict. The Court Care program established by HB 3067 will protect children from witnessing traumatic court proceedings and will allow litigants, advocates, and court staff to give their full attention to court business.

HB 3067 will improve access to justice for low-income families. The 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 their other legal rights. The Court Care program established by HB 3067 will provide necessary childcare to allow parents and caregivers to access the courts.

As a family law practitioner, this is a problem I have seen too many times. When pro se litigants bring their children to court, I cannot effectively advocate and do my job. No one wants to expose these children to messy details of their parent's divorce or separation. I've never actually had a case where the children were asked to sit in the hall; the Judge simply resets the hearing and instructs the parent to come back next time without the child. This is obviously an extreme hardship on the parent who took time off work or school. Especially for low-income families, these inconveniences happening too many times can mean the loss of their jobs, which further exasperates the problem.

I would also like to bring the committee's attention to another group who is affected by this problem: middle and high wage earning litigants who pay increased attorney fees for these hearings where their legal counsel must appear and charge for it, only to have the hearing rescheduled. I make this point to illustrate that having children in the courtroom because of inadequate affordable childcare affects everyone who is present, not just the parent who cannot afford the childcare.

For those reasons, I encourage you to pass HB 3067. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K.H. Denning'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'K' and a distinct 'H'.

Katherine H. Denning
Attorney, Boaz Law Firm

April 3, 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:

We are writing to personally support of HB 3067. Our comments represent our personal opinions and we are not representing the Oregon Judicial Department. In our view the proposed Court Care program offers an excellent opportunity to enhance the access to justice for families with children.

In our roles as circuit judges, we preside over all of the juvenile delinquency and dependency and forcible detainer and eviction cases for Polk County. We also preside over treatment courts for drug abuse and mental illness. We often hear family abuse prevention act cases as well as criminal cases. From this vantage point we see first-hand how the lack of short term drop in childcare impacts parent's and other participant's ability to fully participate in their cases.

Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for parents to bring their children to court. These are often very young children who have difficulty sitting still and being quiet. They distract from the process and impact other participant's ability to have their cases heard. Many of these parents are appearing without representation and therefore are forced to simultaneously pay attention to the proceedings and watch their children. It places them at a distinct disadvantage.

The difficulty in maintain a judicial decorum is, of course, the least of the problems created by having children in court. When a parent brings a child to court they are often exposed to traumatic details regarding their parent's case as well as other cases that may come before the court while they are waiting to have the case heard. Parents and the court are placed in an untenable position. We must either leave the children in the court room or have them wait unattended in the hall way.

The Court Care program established by HB 3067 protects children from witnessing traumatic court proceedings and allows litigants, advocates, and court staff to give their full attention to court business. It further improves access to justice for low-income families. The 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 their other legal rights. The Court Care

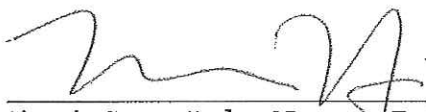
program established by HB 3067 will provide necessary childcare to allow parents and caregivers to access the courts.

For those reasons, we encourage you to pass HB 3067. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Circuit Court Judge Sally L. Avera



Circuit Court Judge Norman R. Hill

CourtCare Concept

Coalition Partners

- Polk County District Attorney's Office
-
- Polk County Victim Assistance Program
-
- Marion County District Attorney's Office
-
- Marion County Victim Assistance Program
-
- Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) programs, both counties
-
- DHS Child Welfare
-
- Local Judges
-
- Local Attorneys
-
- Family Building Blocks
-
- Family YMCA of Marion & Polk Counties
-
- Marion and Polk Early Learning Hub
-
- Chemeketa Community College
-
- Polk County Family & Community Outreach Department
-



Imagine having to go to court for divorce proceedings, a sex abuse trial, a domestic violence case... now imagine not having child care and you have to take your young children with you. This is a current reality for families in both Marion and Polk Counties. Children should not have to be in the room while legal proceedings are taking place. Those involved in the courts have seen babies and toddlers left unattended in hallways while their parents are in courtrooms; young children sent to restrooms unsupervised; children seeing their parents upset and emotional about adult conflicts; children watching as a parent is arrested and taken into custody; children hearing adults talk about family violence, restraining orders, custody disputes, or criminal behavior of family members... thus, the need for CourtCare.

What is CourtCare?

CourtCare is child care where children ages six weeks to twelve years will be cared for in a safe, supportive, and quality environment. They will be spared from witnessing adult conflict, hearing harsh words and seeing potentially disturbing scenes, which could traumatize or even re-traumatize them. If both parent and child are supported during the child's early stages of life, it makes enormous impacts on future health and child development. What children see and experience in early childhood affects both their brain development and their future health.



"I had to drive all the way to Sherwood to take my kids to my sister's house and that took a lot of gas to make two round trips. I would absolutely have used child care if it was available." - Angel, Polk County mom



If both parent and child are supported during the child's early stages of life, it makes enormous impacts on future health and child development.



Mid-Valley CourtCare

Quality Counts!

Our CourtCare program will be high quality and operated by early learning professionals. High quality child care includes: using evidence-based curriculum and materials, following state licensing policies and procedures, and utilizing highly trained staff with a special emphasis in trauma informed care practices. According to a recent report by *Fight Crime: Invest in Kids Oregon* titled "High-Quality Early Care and Education", low quality care can increase the risk of negative outcomes and contribute to social, emotional, and behavioral problems.

Making an Impact

Our project will have three major impact areas: 1) Children are in a safe and nurturing environment while parents and caregivers attending court proceedings-thus reducing childhood trauma associated with exposure to the adult content matter discussed and displayed in courtrooms 2) Staff at both CourtCare sites will be able to refer families and caregivers to much needed local area resources and 3) Overall court business will function with fewer interruptions and distractions from children in the courtroom. Our research has shown that when properly funded, court child care and the collaborations upon which it is based, is highly effective and beneficial to the courts and clients receiving service.

Regular Referrals

This program will serve as an information hub for families as well as a link between much-needed social services and the high-risk families who need them. Each site will have brochures and pamphlets provided by social service and other outreach agencies. Staff will be cross-trained to provide referrals as needed.

Measuring Results

We will have several measurable objectives within this project including: **Utilization:**

How often was CourtCare used? Who used it? Were certain days busier than others? **Referrals:** How many referrals, what kind, and to whom? Are there unmet needs?

Courtroom efficiency:

Do court proceedings run more smoothly? Are parents less stressed and more focused to participate in court?



Are you ready to donate or get more involved?

Visit us at: www.midvalleycourtcare.org

Polk County Contact: Brent DeMoe, demoe.brent@co.polk.or.us

Marion County Contact: Erin Dawson, erinndawson@gmail.com