

Sasha Sergeeva
Joint Committee Tax Reform 6/13/17
HB 2830

My name is Sasha Sergeeva I live and work in Portland and I care deeply about the Child Welfare program. I would like to thank you Rep. Kotek and Senator Hass working very hard on the revenue plan. However, I'm very concerned that the proposal is not enough to address the crisis in child welfare and we are going to have to still make cuts to the program, which would be devastating.

My job is to assess children's safety and keep kids safe. Let me tell you about a child who was significantly abused, removed from unsafe home in Portland and then spent time in DHS office, hotel, bounced around in several foster homes. We eventually found a treatment program in Eugene, and the connections this child had in Portland were disrupted because we didn't have staff to transport the child. Unfortunately the treatment program was shut down due to lack of funding, and again this child began bouncing around with no stability. How can we help this child to heal if we do not have fosters homes, enough staff or resources?

If we had funds to pay higher rates for therapeutic foster homes or behavioral rehabilitation services this child would have had a placement that met his unique needs, if we had budget to hire more people and compensated workers better to retain them, caseloads would be lower and we could have given more attention and time, developed strong relationship with this child Research shows that positive and strong relationship between children and caseworkers creates foundation for healing from trauma.

We can't keep piecing together budgets like this. We need a revenue package that is significant, a game-changing so that Child Welfare can be staffed at %100 , so we can pay for child care and activities for children in our custody, so we can increase rates for foster homes and have therapeutic homes or BRS placements where children's' challenging needs are met.

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If anyone believes that we do not need to raise revenue, you can be the first to help us with our current crisis by becoming foster parents, we brought applications, everything helps, we are in desperate need for foster homes for children with unique needs. Thank you for your