

1/30/2017

Senate Human Services Committee

To the Chair Senator Gelser and Committee Members,

I am a Board member at Jasper Mountain located in Jasper Oregon. I serve on the Board because of the great need to help children who are at high risk. These children have been abused during their short lives in ways that most people cannot imagine. Jasper Mountain and the people there are dedicated to give them a future and have provided hope for the last 35 years

I have been associated with this Organization for over 15 years and many of the Board members have served much longer. Our Board and Advisors are Lawyers, retired school principal, Financial Advisor, Former Springfield City Manager, former Doctor at U of O Child Development Research Center, City Utility Board , Assistant US Attorney, and local Business Managers.

I want to include our staff that have years of schooling and service in the non-profit system who are dedicated to the children who provide all the needed services required.

My comments about staff lead to one of the issues that is very disturbing to me. The Investigations and how long it takes for an outcome. The possible labeling of a dedicated child care provider that may be called an abuser and career destroyed when a child is not harmed or no intent to harm is evident. Also the rights of fair and due process for an employee appeal.

Why do we change or add to the Oregon law that is already on the books that defines Child Abuse ? Currently investigations are based more on the investigators not wanting to be in violation of policy "misconduct for not taking appropriate action" than the reality of no abuse took place. If your job depended on it. what would you do ?

The threat of being labeled a child abuser when applying for a job with children is not the best hiring tool for any business under current rules. If you want to put agencies out of business, this and the sending of letters to all who the agency serves stating that there is a current abuse investigation going on where their child is being cared for without proof of actual harm and intent under the law is in my mind unforgivable.

Jasper Mountain has many programs such as Safe Center, School, Residential, Crisis Response, Community based services, Equestrian and Treatment Foster Care. Services that are needed.

Thank You for your attention to these issues.

Rob Morris

Jasper Mountain Board

