

**HB 2500 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

**Carrier:** Sen. Roblan

**Senate Committee On Human Services**

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**Action Date:** 05/08/17  
**Action:** Do pass the A-Eng bill.  
**Vote:** 5-0-0-0  
**Yeas:** 5 - Dembrow, Gelser, Knopp, Monnes Anderson, Olsen  
**Fiscal:** Fiscal impact issued  
**Revenue:** No revenue impact  
**Prepared By:** Matt Doumit, LPRO Analyst

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Directs Department of Human Services (DHS) to consult with Department of Justice (DOJ) to implement training for DHS caseworkers on juvenile dependency proceedings and unauthorized practice of law. Requires renewal every four years.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Protecting caseworkers from accidental practice of law in child protective proceedings
- Keeping caseworkers and lawyers in their proper respective roles
- DHS collaboration with DOJ to develop training program

**EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

No amendment.

**BACKGROUND:**

Department of Human Services (DHS) staff assigned to child welfare cases are often in contact with courts when clients are involved in dependency or other juvenile proceedings. When legal representation has not been available, DHS personnel have prepared petitions and affidavits, drafted court orders, and presented DHS' position to the court. These activities have the potential to be construed as engaging in the unauthorized practice of law, which is prohibited by persons without proper licensure and membership in the Oregon State Bar.

House Bill 2500-A directs DHS to consult with the Department of Justice (DOJ) to develop and implement training and continuing education for DHS staff regarding the respective roles of caseworkers and attorneys in dependency and other juvenile proceedings, including the unauthorized practice of law. The measure requires continuing education for caseworkers every four years.