

**Confederated Tribes *of the*  
Umatilla Indian Reservation**

Board of Trustees



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**Testimony of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation  
Hearing before the Joint Interim Committee On The First Special Session of 2020  
June 22, 2020**

Good afternoon Co-Chairs Sen. President Courtney and Speaker Kotek, Vice Chairs Leaders Girod and Drazan, and members of the Committee.

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) requests the inclusion of the Oregon Indian Child Welfare Act (HB 4148A from the 2020 short session) in the Oregon special legislative session called by Governor Brown for June 24, 2020.

Oregon ICWA is well-suited for passage in a special session built on addressing both a viral pandemic and racial injustice for historically marginalized communities. Indigenous peoples know well the devastation of foreign viral disease, and as we fight now against COVID-19, CTUIR is even more keenly aware of the need for the preservation of native families and Tribal government, through the connection of native children to their Tribe. The State of Oregon's history of removing native children from their families persists today in disproportionate removal of native children from their families. Especially in pandemic times, it is critical that Tribes be notified and allowed to bring to bear critically needed resources to help protect native children.

Although HB 4148A had broad bipartisan support, it was held up the House floor in the 2020 session. Ultimately it was co-carried by Rep. Sanchez and Rep. Lewis to unanimous passage in the House and passed Senate Judiciary unanimously, with Sen. Hansell's testimony in support, before the close of the 2020 session.

CTUIR asks to renew your bipartisan support in passing Oregon ICWA in special session, in order to protect native children and preserve native families in a time when they are especially at risk.

Thank you for your time and consideration.