



March 20, 2019

Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice-Chair Noble, Vice-Chair Sanchez and Members of the Committee,

RE: Support for HB 2570 Investment in CASA Services

Children First for Oregon urges support of HB 2570, to invest \$8,337,637 in state funding to both maintain current Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) and to recruit, train, and supervise a larger and more diverse group of new CASAs to serve at least 7,032 Oregon children in foster care in 2019-21.

Children First represents the interests of Oregon's nearly 875,000 children and believes that together, with communities and leaders across the state, we can build a state where all children thrive. We work with our more than 110 partner organizations to identify and elevate legislative concepts that will support the needs of Oregon's children. HB 2570 is on the 2019 Children's Agenda.

It is important to note that the Oregon Foster Youth Connection also elevated this issue in its [2018 Policy Recommendations](#). The youth recommendation focused on the need for a more diverse pool of CASAs to meet the needs of our foster youth population.

Currently less than half of Oregon's foster children and youth have a CASA, and this bill will put Oregon on a path to provide sustainable resources to recruit, train, supervise, and support enough volunteers to provide a CASA for every foster child in Oregon. A child with a CASA spends less time in foster care, receives more appropriate services, and is more likely to have increased self-esteem and stronger academic outcomes.

Thank you very much for your attention and service. We ask for your support of HB 2570.

Sincerely,

Chris Coughlin
Legislative Director