

HB 2570 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Human Services and Housing

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 3/20, 3/27

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Appropriates \$8,337,637 from the General Fund to Oregon Department of Administrative Services for the 2019-2021 biennium to expand the CASA volunteer program (Court Appointed Special Advocates).

No revenue impact

Fiscal impact issued

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- History and status of CASA program
- Critical role of CASAs
- Critical funding need
- Importance of recruiting and training volunteers as diverse as the children they serve

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) are designated in every judicial proceeding in juvenile court, in every case involving an abused or neglected child. They are a party to the proceedings. They may be represented by an attorney, may file pleadings and request hearings, they possess subpoena power, and they may examine and cross-examine witnesses. They advocate for the child and operate at the court's discretion. They may investigate the case, bring matters to the court's attention, ensure that others fulfill their obligations to the child, and monitor court orders for compliance and modification. Their presence, their advocacy, their relationships with children are vital to a process that strives to achieve the best outcome for each child.

House Bill 2570 appropriates \$8,337,637 from the General Fund to Oregon Department of Administrative Services for the 2019-2021 biennium to support and expand the CASA volunteer program by recruiting and training a larger and more diverse group of advocates.

Subsequent referral to Joint Ways and Means