

SB 1036 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Human Services

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 4/4, 4/9

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes Foster Child Ombudsman and Foster Parent Ombudsman and specifies duties and powers of both. Requires 24-hour telephone hotline for foster parent complaints. Requires Department of Human Services to notify foster parents and foster children of both ombudsmen to investigate complaints. Modifies duties and powers of Long Term Care Ombudsman, Residential Facilities Ombudsman, and Oregon Public Guardian and Conservator. Allows ombudsmen access to records necessary for investigating complaints, subject to specified conditions. Establishes Office of Oregon Ombudsmen to provide administrative support to Offices of: Long Term Care Ombudsman, Residential Facilities Ombudsman, Foster Parent Ombudsman, Foster Child Ombudsman, and Oregon Public Guardian and Conservator. Specifies duties of administrator and establishes corresponding account separate from General Fund. Establishes advisory committees for ombudsman offices and office of the Oregon Public Guardian and Conservator. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Provisions of the measure

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Allows ombudsman to be removed for just cause upon recommendation to the Governor by the respective advisory committee for ombudsman. Includes licensed conversion facilities in definition of 'long term care facility'. Entitles members of advisory committees compensation and expenses. Modifies duties and powers of Residential Facilities Ombudsman. Includes 'Advocates' to name of office established to provide administrative support to ombudsmen offices.

REVENUE: No revenue impact.

FISCAL: Fiscal impact issued.

BACKGROUND:

An ombudsman is an official appointed to investigate complaints of maladministration. The Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman (LTCO) is an independent state agency that serves long-term care facility residents through complaint investigation, resolution and advocacy for improvement in resident care. The mission of the LTCO is to enhance the quality of life, improve the level of care, protect the individual's rights and promote the dignity of each Oregon citizen residing in a long-term care facility. Within the LTCO is the Long-Term Care Ombudsman, the Oregon Public Guardian, and the Residential Facilities Ombudsman.

Senate Bill 1036 establishes a Foster Child Ombudsman and a Foster Parent Ombudsman, as well as an Office of Oregon Ombudsmen to provide administrative support to all ombudsmen offices, including the Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Residential Facilities Ombudsman, and the Oregon Public Guardian and Conservator. The measure modifies the duties and powers of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Residential Facilities Ombudsman, and Oregon Public Guardian and Conservator. The measure also allows ombudsmen access to the records necessary for investigating complaints, subject to specific conditions. Finally, Senate Bill 1036 establishes advisory committees for LTCO and for the ombudsmen.