

1001 - THE OFFICE OF
Sara Anne G. Gelser



Senator Sara Gelser

SUPPORT HB 2570

THE CHALLENGE

- In 2017, **11,645 Oregon children** were placed in our state's care because they had been abused or neglected.
- The Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) is the only person on a case whose **sole responsibility is the child's best interest**. An Oregon child usually has one volunteer CASA for the entire length of the case – even when there are multiple caseworkers, attorneys, teachers, foster parents, etc. involved.
- **55% of Oregon foster children need – and don't currently have – a CASA**, despite the state statutory (ORS 419B.112) mandate of a CASA for every child in state care. Local CASA programs simply lack the funding to meet this goal.
- **State funding currently provides only 17% of total funding for CASA programs.**



THE SOLUTION

CASA is a critical component in Oregon's fight against child abuse. Children with CASAs are less likely to suffer re-abuse and are more likely to find a permanent home, spend an average of five months less time in foster care, and do better in school.

- 2,050 CASAs provided 250,000+ hours of volunteer advocacy last year for 5,286 Oregon children.
- **New CASA volunteers are waiting to be trained by local CASA programs across Oregon – only held back by insufficient staffing capacity due to inadequate funding.**



CONNECT + LEARN MORE

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*Oregon has the opportunity to invest **\$5.6 million above** CASA's base DAS budget (for a total of \$8.3 million) for the 2019-21 bienium. This investment will provide a larger and more diverse group of new CASA's to serve **1,746 additional foster children** across Oregon during the next two years.*

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