

HB 2568 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Rep. Nathanson, Rep. Stark

House Committee On Human Services and Housing

Action Date: 04/01/19

Action: Do pass with amendments. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 8-0-1-0

Yeas: 8 - Helt, Meek, Mitchell, Noble, Sanchez, Schouten, Williams, Zika

Exc: 1 - Keny-Guyer

Fiscal: Has minimal fiscal impact

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Amie FenderSosa, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 2/6, 4/1

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to study Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Volunteer Programs by July 1, 2020, and report to the Legislative Assembly, as specified, by September 15, 2020.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Results of a study done on CASA
- Number of CASA Volunteer Programs in Oregon
- Current service levels; about 40-50 percent of children need advocates
- Issues experienced by CASA and other programs, including lack of oversight, inability to access information, data collection, and related problems
- Lack of funding
- Best agency or entity to administer CASA

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Changes "study" to "review." Requires DAS to include the department's July 31, 2018 CASA Programs Evaluation Report in the review.

BACKGROUND:

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) are volunteers appointed by courts to advocate on behalf of abused and neglected children. They investigate, examine, and recommend the best options to a court, for a child to be safe, have a permanent home, and to thrive. CASAs spend the majority of their time interviewing people involved in the child's life and the case, including teachers, foster parents, attorneys, caseworkers, counselors, parents, medical professionals, and family members to determine the facts and circumstances of the child's situation.

CASAs receive approximately 40 hours of in-depth training through their local CASA Volunteer Program. Upon completion, all volunteers are sworn in by a local judge and may be assigned to cases. CASA supervisors provide guidance and support to volunteers for the duration of each case.

House Bill 2568-A requires the Department of Administrative Services to study CASA Volunteer Programs and make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly to address operational issues.