

February 10, 2020

Oregon Legislative Assembly
900 State St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support HB 2244 – CourtCare for Marion and Polk Counties

Dear Legislators:

United Way of the Mid-Willamette Valley strongly urges your support of SB1558, continued support of CourtCare programming.

The CDC-Kaiser Permanente Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study has shown that stressful or traumatic events experienced during childhood have a precise dose-responsive correlation with physical and mental health as adults. Early exposure to fear or toxic stress has a negative impact on the development of the prefrontal cortex, which is the rational part of our brain. Court care makes it possible for parents to get the help that they need by speaking freely about their circumstances and avoids the potential harm caused to children being exposed to concerns that they should not need to bear.

CourtCare offers free, licensed, quality care for children of caregivers who must attend legal proceedings or complete paperwork at either the Marion or Polk courthouse. Our community partners in Polk County have seen significant use of Court Care to support access to social service needs.

The lack of affordable, quality childcare should not prevent parents and caregivers from complying with mandatory court appearances, exercising their other legal rights, or seeking the treatment or resources needed to remain healthy and living well. We fully support the continued operation of these services in the communities they currently support such as Polk and Marion County and encourage expansion to additional communities throughout the state.

United Way of the Mid-Willamette Valley strongly urges you to support SB 1558.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Wolf, CEO

