



TO: Senate Committee on General Government and Emergency Preparedness
FROM: Mae Lee Browning, Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association
DATE: February 12, 2020
RE: Support for SB 1558 - CourtCare

Dear Chair Riley, Vice Chair Girod, and Members of the Committee:

OCDLA supports SB 1558.

OCDLA has been the leading voice for public defense policy in Oregon for over 40 years representing 1,200 providers statewide. Our members work with youth in the juvenile justice system, parents whose children have been removed, children in foster care, and adults in criminal justice system, appeals, civil commitments, and post-conviction relief proceedings. OCDLA advocates for legislation ensuring the rights of the accused, those involved in the juvenile justice system, and the attorneys, investigators and others who do this difficult work.

Court Care is a program that has a profound positive impact on the court system. OCDLA attorneys represent many court-involved parents across the state. Court-involved parents attend court for many different issues including juvenile dependency cases, domestic violence issues, criminal charges, treatment court, child custody issues, and other complex and sensitive matters. Many of our clients must bring their children to court in less than ideal situations. It is often because they do not have access to alternative appropriate childcare. **The lack of appropriate childcare should not prevent parents from complying with mandatory court appearances, exercising their other legal rights, or seeking the treatment or resources needed to remain healthy and living well.**

CourtCare provides court-involved parents a means to protect their children from the challenging court process and inappropriate situations. By providing court-involved parents safe and appropriate childcare, the court allows parents to focus on complex legal issues. The court-involved parent is able to make better decisions for themselves and their family.

The return on investment is huge, based on the number of children, and therefore families, served by CourtCare in Polk and Marion counties. **We urge your support of SB 1558.**

Respectfully submitted by,
Mae Lee Browning, J.D.
Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association