



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Human Services

Office of the Director

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June 25, 2020

Senate President Peter Courtney, Co-Chair

House Speaker Tina Kotek, Co-Chair

Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod, Co-Vice Chair

House Minority Leader Christine Drazan, Co-Vice Chair

Members of the Joint Committee on the First Special Session



Re: Support for HB 4214, 2020 First Special Session

Today, the State of Oregon and the Joint Committee on the First Special Session finds itself in a unique position to protect provisions under the Federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). As many national child welfare experts know, ICWA is the gold standard of child welfare policy that keeps tribal children and families together, preserves tribal culture, and fosters tribal sovereignty.

Opponents of ICWA are challenging the constitutionality of the act that has been around since 1978. Should the court rule in their favor, important provisions of ICWA, including the child welfare protections for tribal children, families, and nations would cease for states without existing ICWA state legislation.

For these reasons, we ask for your support of House Bill 4214, the Oregon Indian Child Welfare Act.

Passage of HB 4214 will align Oregon with a handful of other states in fulfilling responsibility to Tribal Nations who have entrusted the state to care for their children through state agencies such as Oregon's DHS Child Welfare. HB 4214 affirms the commitment to Tribal Nations in Oregon and honors tribal sovereign status. Finally support of this measure ensures protection of the tribal family structure, in turn helping preserve tribal culture.

We share our gratitude to Senate President Peter Courtney, House Speaker Tina Kotek and all of the members of Joint Committee on the First Special Session for consideration of House Bill 4214, the Oregon Indian Child Welfare Act.

(Ahéhee') Thank you,

Adam Becenti

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“Assisting People to Become Independent, Healthy and Safe”

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