

## **HB 2424 -2 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

### **House Committee On Human Services**

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**Sub-Referral To:** Joint Committee On Ways and Means

**Meeting Dates:** 3/1, 3/3, 3/31

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#### **WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Directs the Department of Human Services (DHS) to establish a child-caring agency grant and training program in consultation with the Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA). Establishes parameters and allows DHS to contract with a non-profit organization for program administration, with biannual reports to DHS. Defines abuse that is and is not a result of substandard care for purposes of required finding by DHS that a report is either substantiated or unsubstantiated. Establishes the Child Welfare Cultural Equity Program at DHS to improve access to diverse child welfare providers. Establishes a qualified mental health associate incentive program in OHA to subsidize loan repayment for qualifying providers. Sets forth eligibility criteria and terms of participation. Permits child-caring agencies to allow persons to serve as qualified mental health associates if certain criteria are met. Appropriates \$1,250,000 to DHS for child-caring agency grant and training program and \$2,500,000 for the Child Welfare Cultural Equity Program. Appropriates \$250,000 to OHA for deposit in the Health Care Provider Incentive Fund and \$250,000 to OHA for qualified mental health associates designated to assist child-caring agencies.

#### **ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

##### **EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

-2 Deletes definitions of abuse that is and is not a result of substandard care for purposes of required finding by DHS that a report is either substantiated or unsubstantiated.

##### **BACKGROUND:**

The Department of Human Services (DHS) investigates certain reports of suspected abuse in child-caring agencies and must find, at the conclusion of its investigation, that the report is either substantiated or not. There is currently no language in statute distinguishing the impacts of substandard care; whether or when such impacts constitute abuse for purposes of findings that DHS is required to make. There are also few, if any, current incentive programs designed to increase the number of mental health providers in child care settings or to support efforts to improve diversity among providers in the child care workforce generally.

House Bill 2424 establishes a child-caring agency grant and training program and a Child Welfare Cultural Equity Program and appropriates \$1,250,000 and \$2,500,000 to DHS respectively, for each. The measure also allows child-caring agencies to hire mental health associates and appropriates \$250,000 to OHA for a loan repayment subsidy program. Finally, the measure provides for impacts of substandard care in the context of DHS findings whether a report of suspected abuse in a child caring agency is substantiated or not.