

SB 548 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

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Meeting Dates: 4/24, 5/17

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide luggage carriers for transporting personal effects of children who are entering into, transitioning, or leaving foster care. Sunsets January 2, 2029. Directs DHS to report to interim legislative committees annually by September 15 starting in 2024 and specifies report contents.

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

SENATE VOTE: Passed. Ayes, 26; Nays, 2; Excused, 2

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Experiences of children leaving their homes
- Use of trash bags to transport children's belongings
- Organizations providing duffel bags as alternative to trash bags
- Requirement for DHS to report on use of trash bags
- Instances when children may need to use multiple duffel bags
- Funding mechanisms for donated luggage

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Children may be removed from their homes and placed in protective custody when law enforcement or the Department of Human Services (DHS) have determined that it is not safe for them to remain home. Generally, a court order is required for removal except in emergency situations. Children are placed in shelter care until juvenile court proceedings begin to determine placement for the child's care with a noncustodial parent or relative, foster care, or adoption. Placements in foster care may not be permanent, and children in foster care may experience several different placements throughout their time in the foster care system. In the 2021 fiscal year, a total of 8,620 children spent at least one day in foster care, according to a [DHS report](#). The [DHS child welfare data dashboard](#) reports that every 1,000 days, the average child in foster care will move placements 5.3 times, which is higher than the federal standard of 4.1 times. Project Never Again, an Oregon-based organization, reports that children often have their belongings placed in trash bags when they move between homes or enter foster care.

Senate Bill 548 A requires DHS to provide luggage carriers to transport children's personal items entering foster care, moving between homes, or exiting foster care.