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To: House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services  
From: Maggie Carlson, Attorney

Re: **Support for HB 4087**

Dear Chair Reynolds, Vice-Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and Members of the Committee,

Founded in 1975, Youth, Rights & Justice is Oregon's only non-profit juvenile public defense firm. Each year, we provide holistic, client-centered representation to hundreds of children, youth, and parents in Oregon's juvenile court system. Additionally, we provide early defense advocacy to keep families together and educational advocacy so children can attend, graduate, and succeed in school. In 2021, we launched our juvenile expunction clinic.

Through our advocacy for Oregon's children, youth, and parents, we often see the same systemic problems and we work to change the policies that contribute to these problems. One glaring systemic problem is that Black, Indigenous and People of Color are overrepresented in child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

For children that the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) places in hotels, or "temporary lodging," the overrepresentation is significant. In 2021, Black and African American children were 4.6% of the child welfare population but were 20% of the temporary lodging population.

**YRJ supports House Bill 4087.**

The use of placing foster children in temporary lodging due to lack of appropriate placements has been a significant issue in the State of Oregon. Judge McShane recently appointed Marty Beyer, Ph.D., to serve as a special master and advise the court about what actions ODHS could take to find appropriate placements for children in foster care and end the use of temporary lodging.

Dr. Beyer wrote a report outlining the steps she believed would help decrease the use of temporary lodging for foster children. On January 11, 2024, Dr. Beyer testified before the Senate Interim Committee on Human Services, sharing her findings and recommendations. Recommendation Ten addresses the need to "right-size" residential capacity and ensure for well-supported transitions as children exit that level of care. HB 4087 would allow for this.