

To: Senator Sara Gelser Blouin and Members of the Human Services Committee

From: Cilette Mitchell

Re: Declaration on Family Court Reform and CPS/DHS Overlap

Dear Chair Gelser Blouin and Committee Members,

I am submitting this declaration to share my family's experience and highlight systemic problems in Oregon's Family Court system and its overlap with CPS/DHS.

My three grandchildren were removed from their mother, who had no open CPS cases, no abuse, and no allegations of abuse. The removal was not based on evidence of harm. Instead, the father's family colluded to take the children, and the family courts allowed it to happen. This demonstrates how the system can be manipulated, punishing protective relatives while enabling improper removals.

CPS often dismisses legitimate safety concerns as "civil matters," while decisions favoring certain parties are made behind closed doors. The result is devastating: children are removed from safe, loving homes, families are left powerless, and my grandchildren have experienced profound fear, anxiety, and confusion due to the abrupt separation from their mother and family.

This is not an isolated problem. The overlap between CPS/DHS and Family Court allows coercion, manipulation, and systemic injustice to persist.

I respectfully urge the Legislature to establish a statewide Family Court Reform Task Force that includes CPS/DHS in the process. Children deserve a system that is transparent, accountable, fair, and focused on their safety and well-being.

Respectfully submitted,

Cilette Mitchell

Oceanside, California