

Date: October 10, 2025
To: Senate Committee on Human Services
From: Rebecca Read
Re: Family Court Reform

Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice Chair Linthicum and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services.

I would like to bring to your attention a critical issue that affects my family, as it pertains to the family court system in Oregon. Earlier this year I provided testimony on this matter to the House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services. For over three years my son, who is the father of our seven year old grandson, has been trying to gain custody of his son to provide a safer, healthier environment for him. Our grandson's mother has made terrible decisions about his welfare and does not provide a safe home for him. Since June 2024, she has had him institutionalized in a residential mental health treatment center in Portland. We believe this was unwarranted, based on inaccurate diagnoses initiated by the mother.

For the past three years my son has tried to bring his case to court. Numerous times the court date was cancelled. I believe it was cancelled three times because a presiding judge was not available. Each time the court date has been reset, at least six months out. This is a travesty. There is a seven year old child whose well-being is being compromised because of court delays. Currently no court has heard this case, and our grandson's education and well-being continue to remain in limbo. Our grandson's mother is not advocating for him properly, nor does she abide by set court orders requiring her to cooperate with the non-custodial parent.

Our state's children's services agencies have failed our family with inadequate case management for our grandchild. Proper oversight would have uncovered the crisis a long time ago, and actions would have been put in place. There is a total breakdown in our state's child welfare system. There is no comprehensive oversight, and insufficient judicial process.

We must prioritize the crisis in our Family Court system across Oregon now. Uncover inadequate services and hold judges accountable for biased rulings and obstruction of justice.

We have made progress fixing our broken foster care system. We need the will and resolve to do the same for family court reform. The lives of too many children and families have been shattered and it needs to stop.

Please help us take care of our children properly by creating a statewide Family Court Reform Task Force that includes Child Protective Services and the Department of Human Services in the reform process. It is sad beyond belief what is happening to children and families across Oregon. And it doesn't need to be this way.

Thank you.

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