



The Lighthouse for Kids  
Clatsop County Child Abuse Assessment Program  
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January 30, 2026

Co-Chairs Lieber and Sanchez and Members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee,

The Lighthouse for Kids in Astoria, Oregon is the Child Advocacy Center in Clatsop County and we write today to urge you to preserve continued service level funding for Children’s Advocacy Centers and oppose any cuts to these direct services.

Children’s Advocacy Centers are the entities that provide medical exams and forensic interviews when there is a question of child abuse. There are 24 of these Centers across the State that serve all 36 counties.

We understand that during the recent budget exercise when all state agencies were asked to identify potential cuts, the Oregon Department of Justice (ODOJ) put forward possible cuts to the Crime Victims Survivor Services Division (CVSSD), which includes funding that goes to the Children’s Advocacy Centers as well as other entities, like domestic violence shelters and services.

CACs receive funding from multiple streams—state, federal, and private donations—all of which are facing instability. The Legislature must act now to protect children’s access to these critical services and preserve the limited state dollars that these entities receive.

The Legislature has taken action many times to demonstrate its support for stabilizing state funding for victim services, most recently by adopting POP 327 in DOJ’s budget in the 2025 Session. This POP secured the \$6M/biennium “one-time” funding that CACs have received continually since 2021 and secured this funding as “continued service level,” and solidified the intent of HB 4140, which Rep. Kropf and 37 bipartisan co-sponsors passed in 2024.

Any potential 2026 cuts will leave many child abuse victims without access to trauma-informed care and legal advocacy, resulting in long-term psychological harm and a reduced ability for our justice system to protect our most vulnerable.

The effectiveness of police, prosecution, and child welfare agencies is closely tied to the support provided by CACs. These systems are interdependent, and the work of CACs is crucial in ensuring that child abuse cases are handled efficiently, effectively, and with the best interests of the child in mind. When CACs are underfunded, the strain is felt across all related systems, leading to diminished outcomes for child abuse victims and increased burdens on already stretched resources.

We understand that there are difficult decisions to be made ahead, and we hope that this legislature will prioritize the funding that is necessary to fund Children’s Advocacy Centers and other victim services at the current service level.

Sincerely,

Marvin Bermudez, Executive Director  
Dr. Roy Little, Board Vice-President  
Erin Reding, Board Secretary

Jodi Libertad, Board President  
Marilyn Reilly, Board Treasurer