

HB 2216 -2, -4, -5 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Human Services and Housing

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Meeting Dates: 2/9, 2/16, 3/9

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes specified rights for foster children. Directs Department of Human Services (DHS) to adopt rules establishing the Oregon Foster Children’s Sibling Bill of Rights. Directs DHS to review the rules periodically and promote participation of current and former foster children in developing the rules.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-2 Clarifies terms for foster child and sibling. Expands the essential rights of siblings who are foster children to include documentation of rights, explanation of contact denial with siblings, applicability of rights, active engagement in contact with siblings, and ability to testify at guardianship proceedings.

-4 Clarifies terms for foster child and sibling. Expands the essential rights of siblings who are foster children to include documentation of rights, explanation of contact denial with siblings, applicability of rights, and request foster child's attorney advocate for contact and visits with siblings.

-5 Specifies the bill shall not affect the application of the Indian Child Welfare Act.

BACKGROUND:

Currently, Oregon statute has established the Foster Children’s Bill of Rights (ORS 418.202) and the Foster Parent’s Bill of Rights (ORS 418.648). Foster Children Bill of Rights and Foster Parent Bill of Rights are designed to inform foster children and foster parents of their rights within the child welfare system.

House Bill 2216 directs the Department of Human Services to establish the Foster Children’s Sibling Bill of Rights. Outlined within HB 2216 are essential rights for siblings who are foster children including placements together, communication guidance, and training for foster parents on sibling relationships. The bill also directs DHS to review the rules periodically and promote participation of current and former foster children in developing the rules.