

HB 2216 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Rep. Piluso

House Committee On Human Services and Housing

Action Date: 03/09/17

Action: Do pass with amendments. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 9-0-0-0

Yeas: 9 - Gorsek, Keny-Guyer, Meek, Nearman, Noble, Olson, Piluso, Sanchez, Stark

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Cassandra Soucy, LPRO Analyst

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:

- Rights for siblings in the foster care system
- Communication with siblings while in foster care system
- Development of sibling contact plan

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Clarifies terms for foster child and sibling. Expands the essential rights of siblings who are foster children to include documentation of rights, explanation of denying contact with sibling, applicability of rights, and ability for child's attorney to advocate for contact and visitation with siblings. 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). These statutes are designed to inform foster children and foster parents of their rights within the child welfare system.

House Bill 2216 A directs the Department of Human Services to establish the Foster Children’s Sibling Bill of Rights. Outlined within HB 2216 A 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 development of a sibling contact plan, receipt of documented rights for foster child and requests the foster child's attorney advocate for contact and visitation with siblings. HB 2216 A specifies the bill shall not affect the application of the Indian Child Welfare Act.