



# CIRCUIT COURT OF OREGON

FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT  
CLACKAMAS COUNTY JUVENILE COURT  
OREGON CITY, OR 97045

COLLEEN F. GILMARTIN  
JUDICIAL HEARINGS  
REFEREE

(503) 557-2841  
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February 3, 2020

Dear Chair Sanchez, Vice Chairs Bynum and Sprenger, and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am the full-time Juvenile Court Judge Pro-Tem for Clackamas County. I write to convey Clackamas County's strong support of House Bill 4040. Over the past fifteen years I have been involved with the Clackamas County Juvenile Court, as both a district attorney and judicial officer. During this time, I have observed the immense benefits families received when the court and child welfare implemented a strong and early response to substance abuse issues adversely affecting parenting. A Family Treatment Court in Clackamas County could serve many families with wrap-around care for parents on the road to recovery and children at risk. Combining specialized drug treatment services with the support of intensive judicial involvement and oversight by experienced juvenile judges and staff will make a tremendous difference in the success of families and their futures. Here in Clackamas County we are prepared to make this investment with your support.

***The Need in Clackamas County is Urgent and Real: A Different Response Is Needed***

Clackamas County is as a microcosm of the State of Oregon. The unique geography and population of Clackamas County means we serve a variety of individuals from urban and rural populations, ethnically diverse, and socio-economically varied. As a result, a parent's treatment needs, and the needs of each family, are different. A Family Treatment Court is designed to provide appropriately tailored responses based on the uniqueness of each family – a perfect program for a diverse community like Clackamas County.

A Family Treatment Court model combines intensive judicial monitoring with multidisciplinary interventions. Most dependency petitions filed in Clackamas County are focused on the issue of substance abuse adversely affecting parenting. This has been consistent for the years I have been involved with dependency cases. By offering treatment, accountability, and supportive opportunities for safe reunification this program offers the potential for real change. Additionally, this program will decrease the amount of time children are in foster care and reduce trauma to both parent and child. It also increases the possibility of providing services to families *prior* to the removal of a child from the home, eliminating potential trauma to a child. Understanding the benefit to the child, not just the treatment benefit to the parent, is imperative when discussing the necessity of a Family Treatment Court.

Another central component of a Family Treatment Court is the frequency of case management meetings and judicial oversight of the case. No longer will a family have to wait weeks or longer to voice a barrier they are facing because they will receive weekly, continuous support and feedback; no time is wasted. For a child in foster care or a parent whose child is in foster care, every day counts.



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## *Delivering Results, Healing Parents, Reducing Trauma*

Family Treatment Courts deliver measurable, positive results. Children are less likely to be placed in foster care, parents are more likely to be successful in treatment, and the promise of recovery is real. I am confident that an investment in Clackamas County will yield positive results for families, which in turn results in the well-being of our community.

I urge you to support House Bill 4040. I thank you for your consideration and welcome any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Colleen F. Gilmartin  
Clackamas County Judge Pro-Tem  
Juvenile Court

Cc: Kathie Steele, Presiding Judge, Clackamas County  
Debbie Spradley, Trial Court Administrator, Clackamas County  
Ann Lininger, Circuit Court Judge, Clackamas County  
Leola McKenzie, Director of Juvenile and Family Court Programs, Oregon Judicial Department

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