

## **Excerpts from HB 5006 A - Budget Report and Measure Summary p. 37-38**

### **Re: DHS Representation & Dependency Efficiencies**

The Subcommittee approved \$6,916,041 Other Funds expenditure limitation and 35 permanent full-time positions (30.80 FTE) for the Civil Enforcement Division - Child Advocacy Section to represent Child Welfare caseworkers in court and provide full access to legal representation, legal counsel, legal advice, litigation support, and training. The revenue to support this package was approved in SB 5526, the primary budget bill for the Department of Human Services (DHS). DHS will be billed by DOJ no more than \$6.9 million for the increase in juvenile dependency workload using DOJ's traditional fee-for-service billing model. DOJ will also provide DHS with a monthly billing summary of the legal work performed.

DOJ has committed to tracking quality assurance measures, including outcome measures.

Statewide implementation will be through a three-phase approach across all 36 counties:

- **Phase-I will be completed by January 1, 2018 for:** Benton; Coos; Gilliam; Grant; Hood River; Josephine; Lane; Lincoln; Linn; Morrow; Polk; Sherman; Tillamook; Wasco; and Wheeler Counties.
- **Phase-II will be completed by July 1, 2018 for:** Columbia; Crook; Deschutes; Douglas; Harney; Jackson; Jefferson; Klamath, Lake; Malheur; Umatilla; and Yamhill counties.
- **Phase-III will be completed by January 1, 2019 for:** Baker; Clackamas; Clatsop; Curry; Marion; Multnomah; Union; Washington; and Wallowa counties.

The final implementation schedule, however, may change depending upon the needs of a specific county. Both DOJ and DHS will work collaboratively with county District Attorneys to ensure juvenile dependency cases are handled in a consistent and coordinated manner with as much continuity as possible throughout the legal proceedings.

This investment in legal services was, in part, the result of work completed by the Task Force on Legal Representation in Childhood Dependency, which was established by SB 222 (2015). While, due to limited General Fund resources, the Legislature was unable to fund most Task Force recommendations, the affected state agencies and legal partners are committed to continuing to work on system improvements. In recognition of this commitment, the Subcommittee approved the following budget note:

#### **Budget Note:**

The Department of Human Services, Department of Justice, Oregon Judicial Department, and Public Defense Services Commission shall work collaboratively, at both the state and local levels, to solicit input on, develop, and implement strategies to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Oregon's juvenile dependency systems and to determine the appropriate level of legal services. Potential strategies should include standardizing forms, streamlining processes, conforming practices, and adopting administrative or court rules. The agencies are expected to identify and begin implementing strategies no later than July 1, 2018. Options for providing more effective and cost-efficient legal and other services should also be reviewed and analyzed. The agencies will submit a joint report on the progress of these efforts to the Interim Joint Committee on Ways and Means or the Emergency Board by October 2018. In addition, each agency shall include an update, in its budget presentation to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means during the 2019 session, on its specific roles, activities, strategies, and costs to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Oregon's juvenile dependency system.