

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued

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| Action: | Do Pass the A-Engrossed Measure |
| Vote: | 4 - 0 - 1 |
| Yeas: | Kruse, Monnes Anderson, Telfer, Verger |
| Nays: | 0 |
| Exc.: | Morrisette |
| Prepared By: | Jennifer Kellar, Administrator |
| Meeting Dates: | 5/20 |

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Allows Department of Human Services to contract with local providers of victim services for the location of staff members at departmental offices for the purpose of fostering a closer working relationship between child welfare and victim service providers. Provides a model for staff to provide case reviews, coordination and consultation and make referrals to domestic violence services when child welfare cases are closed after an initial assessment.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Advantages to coordination of domestic violence experts and caseworkers
- Accessibility to services, education, advocacy and creation of safety plans more successfully implemented in combined offices
- Special needs of victims and children in domestic violence situations
- Pilot project funding
- Necessity of measure for agencies to work conjunctively
- Measure provides best practice model for addressing needs of children in violent homes
- Correlation between domestic violence and child abuse and fatality cases

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: National statistics reflect a 30 to 60 percent overlap in child abuse and domestic violence, and statewide Department of Human Services (DHS) statistics show a 25 to 32 percent co-occurrence in Oregon. Exposure to domestic violence is associated with negative physical and mental health outcomes, cognitive and developmental difficulties in children, as well as with academic, behavioral, social and emotional challenges. Domestic violence advocates provide comprehensive support, assist child welfare caseworkers in developing case plans, and work with parents to access resources for completion of the case plan. Domestic violence advocates provide information and assistance in negotiating the child welfare system, as well as instituting safety planning and providing information about legal, housing, employment, counseling and child care resources.

Oregon's most recent federal review of DHS' Child and Family Services Division identified several points where state services failed to address the safety needs of children. After the review, a child safety workgroup was convened to make recommendations for improving Oregon's child welfare system. The service delivery model proposed by House Bill 3273-A was one of its recommendations. The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges identify the placement of domestic violence advocates in child welfare offices as a best practice. Several counties in Oregon have participated successfully in federally funded pilot programs using this model.

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This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.