

House Human Services and Housing Committee

Written Presentation

April 29, 2013

Rep. Carolyn Tomei, Chair
Andy Olson, Vice-Chair
Rep. Sara Gelser
Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer
Rep. Gail Whitsett

Rep. David Gomberg Vice-Chair
Rep. Joe Gallegos
Rep. Vic Gilliam
Rep. Gene Whisnant

Dear Chair Tomei & Committee members,

First I apologize for not being able to attend this hearing in person but I do thank you for the honor of being asked to address the committee.

First, as introduction, I am Don Darland, Treasurer & former President of the Oregon Foster Parent Association(OFPA). My wife and I have been fostering children for over 22 years.

Over the years we have seen many successes & challenges with the Child Welfare system. The certification process has been improved. The rates have been improved. Relatives are being involved more and much more.

It seems that some of the challenges really never change. So I will address just a few of my pet peeves concerning the status of our system that I know can be fixed for the better of all.

1. **Certification of “case carrying” child welfare social workers and their supervisors. NOT A LICENSE**

This would not only improve the sense of professionalism of our workers but improve the experience the children and their families have within the system. This should include addressing “Secondary Trauma” in our workers.

2. **Reduce or eliminate the SSA positions and hire more “case carrying” child welfare social workers.**

Let them do their own transportation and supervising of visits. Let them do the “social work” that they are held accountable to.

3. Reimplement the TEAM concept when working with foster parents.

The TEAM concept model that Casey "Family To Family" developed years ago has gone by the wayside and not taught to workers nor foster parents. There are pockets of staff still doing this because it is the right thing to do.

REMEMBER, the definition of insanity: "Doing the same thing and expecting a different outcome".

These are just a few of the issues that I personally have been advocating for in the past few years. I would be very interested in sharing more details in a one on one meeting with any or all of the committee members.

Thank you,

Don Darland
38183 Hwy 226
Scio, OR 97374
503-394-2305