

SB 244 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Gelser

Senate Committee On Human Services

Action Date: 02/06/17

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

Vote: 5-0-0-0

Yeas: 5 - Dembrow, Gelser, Knopp, Monnes Anderson, Olsen

Fiscal: No fiscal impact

Revenue: No revenue impact

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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Clarifies Department of Human Services' notification requirements regarding child-caring agencies. Defines terms. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Current abuse notification requirements
- Level of need in increasing number of child placement settings
- Child interview procedures during abuse investigations
- Measure's impact on new and existing children in care

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Defines "governmental agency" for purposes of statutes governing child-caring agencies and statutes governing placement in foster homes by child-caring agencies.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon law requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to investigate child-caring agencies when it becomes aware of any failures to comply with licensing criteria. DHS must then report alleged violations to state agencies or governing boards responsible for the child-caring agency, other government agencies that have contracts with the child-caring agency, and individuals relevant to the child in care's case. If the alleged violations are substantiated, DHS must update individuals relevant to the child in care's case, and involve its Director and internal licensing and child welfare personnel.

Senate Bill 244 A clarifies DHS' notification requirements in regards to abuse allegations. It requires DHS to inform the Oregon Youth Authority or the developmental disabilities office of alleged abuse if the child-caring agency serves children committed to the care of those state agencies. It adds case managers to the list of individuals receiving notice of alleged violations, and it adds a number of relevant individuals to the list of those receiving notice of substantiated abuse. Senate Bill 244 A also clarifies what actions DHS can take if an investigation reveals deficiencies impacting child health, safety, or welfare.