

February 25, 2019

To: Co-Chair Senator Lee Beyer, Co-Chair Representative Rob Nosse, and members of the Committee

Re: The Governor's Budget Recommended Budget – HB5026

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Governor's recommended budget, HB5026. The Governor's Child Foster Care Advisory Commission (CFCAC), an 11-member commission established in 2016 pursuant to HB 4080, urges you to support the Governor's recommended budget. (Please see one-page attachment regarding CFCAC). The proposed investments in, among other things, housing, addictions treatment, in-home services, parent-child representation, and therapeutic foster homes are needed to stabilize our current system of care and to ensure that our children are safe and secure and that their families have the resources to meet their needs and thrive.

Through various reports and studies that include the Secretary of State Audit, we know that Oregon's Child Welfare System is not meeting the needs of those it serves. The problems include the lack of foster care placements to meet the needs of children, the decline in foster parents, a number of staffing challenges for the Department of Human Services, and a shortage of resources for families in need of assistance. The Governor's recommended budget is targeted to meet these problems at various points in the system.

First, the Governor's recommended budget provides funding to address the root causes that drive foster care placements by making investments in housing, addictions treatment, and early childhood education.

Second, the Governor's recommended budget provides funding to ensure that children who do enter care remain safe and are able to achieve timely permanency. These investments include providing services to families, ensuring that caseworkers have the tools and resources needed to support families, and having a centralized child abuse hotline. In addition, these funds will go to providing high-quality support training to foster care parents. The CFCAC has heard, time and time again, from various foster parents about their need for training and support and how training and support is one way to secure retention of foster parents. Moreover, the investments to increase the number of parents and children who are served by the Parent Child Representation Program look promising.

Third, the Governor's recommended budget also addresses the needs of youth who end up aging out of foster care and their need to be supported, provided resources to become successful adults, and to helping them transition out of care without becoming homeless.

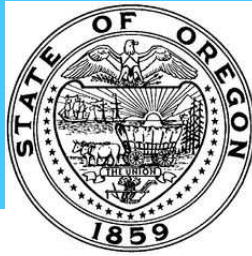
The CFCAC believes that investments are needed throughout the system to make it stable and ensure that it is able to serve the most vulnerable in our state. Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Respectfully,

/s/ Valerie Colas and /s/ Elliott Hinkle

Chair Valerie Colas and Vice-Chair Elliott Hinkle  
Governor's Child Foster Care Advisory Commission  
900 Court Street, NE, Suite 254  
Salem, OR 97301-4047  
<https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policy/Pages/CFCAC.aspx>

# The Governor's Child Foster Care Advisory Commission



## OUR CHARGE

To study the legal and policy issues pertaining to the foster care system in Oregon, monitor accountability and develop recommendations on improving the current state of Oregon's foster care system, to help ensure our children achieve timely safety, permanency and well-being.

### Who We Are



The Commission is made up of public, private, and nonprofit agencies, organizations and other entities with experience in, interest in and responsibility for the provision of care to children in the foster care system in this state.



- Foster Care Alumni
- Caregivers
- Service Providers
- Foster Parents
- Attorneys
- CASA
- Tribal Representative



- Ensuring Safety
- Decreasing Disproportionality
- Promoting Trauma Informed Approaches



### Our Lens

The Commission is committed to ensuring that each recommendation is seen through a lens that is focused on safety, decreasing disproportionality and promoting trauma informed care.



### The Road Ahead

The on-going basis of the Commission allows its members to take a long-term view and make recommendations about what is necessary to best serve Oregon foster care children and youth and their families.



- Advocacy
- Accountability
- Informed Decision Making
- Funding for Sustainability