



May 15, 2019

Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice-Chairs Noble and Sanchez and Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Chris Coughlin. I am the Legislative Director of Children First for Oregon and am here today as an adult supporter of the Oregon Foster Youth Connection.

Hanna has done a great job laying out some of the data and context around the need for and impact of the Independent Living Program services. I will focus on the breakdown of the dollars that would fund SB 745. The \$8.5 million in SB 745 are the same investments outlined in the Department of Human Services' Policy Option Package 142 which was included in the Governor's Recommended Budget.

**POP 142: Independent Living Program - Service Enhancement  
2019-21 Biennium**

<b>Stability of Community Contracted Providers</b>		
ILP Life Skills Services	\$2,354,400	Increase monthly service rates to stabilize current programs and increase opportunities for new community partners.
Youth Engagement Services	(\$294,000)	
Sub Total	\$2,060,400	

<b>Quality of Service Array/Expand Population to Ages 14 -23</b>		
Serving 14 - 15 year olds ILP Life Skills Services	\$3,974,400	Expand population served
Youth Engagement Services Serving 14 - 15 year olds	\$284,400	Support for assessments and transition planning documentation
Serving 21-23 year olds iLP Life Skills Services	\$258,300	Expand population served - priced for 21 months due to need for new policy and rule

		creation
Youth Engagement Services Serving 21 - 23 year olds	\$16,013	Support for assessments and transition planning documentation - priced for 21 months due to need for new policy and rule creation
Sub Total	\$4,497,113	

<b>Comprehensive Services - Support</b>		
Create a Young Adult Transitions (YAT) Navigator	\$300,000	Provide an "800" number for young adults to call when in need of support who has access to limited cash assistance for emergencies not provided for by other services providers.
Financial Support for Urgent Needs	\$100,000	
Sub Total	\$400,000	

<b>Comprehensive Services - Housing</b>		
Increase monthly housing subsidy to youth aging out of care	\$151,200	Increase monthly rate to \$900 (based cost of living in their area). Current rate is \$795
Transitional Housing Programs/Independent Resident Facilities	\$720,000	20 slots for current foster youth transitioning out of care, in partnership with communities
Transition Foster Homes	\$253,800	15 slots for older teens/young adults, with specially trained foster parents
Sub Total	\$1,125,000	

Total Services	\$8,082,513	
Additional Staffing	\$417,487	2 PA2s at 1.92 FTE
Grand Total	\$8,500,000	

In addition, SB 745 provides language to be sure caseworkers share information about ILP services with all foster youth in care beginning at age 14. Right now, youth are referred to participate beginning at age 16, so the goal of this change is to make sure all youth are aware of the ILP resources, including those youth in residential placements.

I want to share some thoughts from two other members of the OFYC Legislative Team. In March, Nathaniel shared with Senate Human Services, that “Expanding ILP services throughout the state is congruent with OFYC’s vision to ensure that all children and youth in the foster care system, from the youngest to those aging-out, *are well cared for and empowered to succeed.*”

On April 30, Justin participated in a press conference on the needs in the child welfare system where they shared the following, “I was in foster care for more than half of my life, and I know there needs to be changes in Oregon’s child welfare system and that NOW is the time for those changes. We can’t wait any longer for these changes to happen, and changes can’t happen without having enough money. Investing in improving child welfare now can truly shape the future of Oregon, because the youth who reside in the beautiful state we call home are who make the future of Oregon brighter! Youth will undoubtedly become lawyers, doctors, and even Representatives and Senators.”

SB 745 is a chance to provide opportunities. Child Welfare needs targeted investments, and while we work together to stabilize and improve the system, the foster youth served by ILP will continue to age out of care. This is a way to provide better supports to get them on a path to independence, not homelessness.

Thank you for this opportunity. We would be happy to answer any questions.