



CIRCUIT COURT OF OREGON

FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
CLACKAMAS COUNTY COURTHOUSE
OREGON CITY, OR 97045

ANN M. LININGER
CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE

(503) 650-8949
FAX (503) 650-8924

February 3, 2020

Chair Tawna Sanchez
Vice-Chair Sherrie Sprenger
Vice-Chair Janelle Bynum
Committee Members
Oregon House Committee on Judiciary
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 4040 – Family Treatment Courts Program

Dear Chair Sanchez, Vice-Chairs Sprenger and Bynum, and Members of the Committee:

One of my jobs as a circuit court judge is to handle foster care (“dependency”) cases. A primary reason why Oregon children are placed in foster care is that their parents experience serious substance use disorders that prevent them from parenting safely. A family treatment court (“FTC”) program helps parents achieve long-term sobriety while preventing or minimizing the need for children to be placed in foster care. FTCs ensure that families have the support they need, including treatment, counseling, social services, childcare, housing, and transportation assistance, so parents and children can stay together while parents work on their recoveries.

I have worked with one mother in our circuit who has been sober for several months. Her children are home from foster care on an in-home safety plan. She faces a positive, complex situation. Now in addition to attending counseling and treatment sessions, completing related homework, providing UAs, participating in recovery support meetings, riding the bus to her appointments, and staying sober, this mother is also single parenting, providing for her kids, maintaining a home, and scrambling to find childcare so she can fulfill her obligations. I worry that without adequate support, she could relapse. An FTC program would help ensure that she receives the coordinated, focused help she needs.

I believe that creation of FTCs would help a lot of Oregon children and families. Thanks for your careful attention to HB 4040.

Sincerely,

Judge Ann Lininger
Clackamas County Circuit Court

