



CIRCUIT COURT OF OREGON

FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
CLACKAMAS COUNTY COURTHOUSE
OREGON CITY, OR 97045

KATHIE F. STEELE
PRESIDING CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE

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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: HB 4040 – Creation of Family Treatment Courts

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

We write to share why creation of a Family Treatment Court (“FTC”) program would greatly benefit children and families in Clackamas County. An FTC program would help minimize or eliminate the time that children spend in foster care due to parents’ untreated substance use disorders (“SUDs”). FTC programs help ensure that parents whose SUDs have created concerns for their children’s safety receive treatment, counseling, accountability (through regular court appearances), and other essential supports so they can begin and sustain recovery. We anticipate a Clackamas FTC would serve 45 families per year.

Over 500 Clackamas County children spent time in foster care during 2018. Safety concerns arising from parents’ SUDs form a basis for over 70% of placements in foster care in Oregon. An FTC program would help parents experiencing SUD begin recovery and parent safely. It would enable children stay with their parents and avoid the trauma of foster care. We believe an FTC would improve our court’s ability to administer justice and protect vulnerable people. Thanks for your work to help Oregon families.

Sincerely,

Presiding Judge Kathie Steele
Clackamas County Circuit Court

Debbie Spradley
Clackamas Circuit Court Administrator

