



Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for Jackson County

Jackson County Justice Building – 100 S. Oakdale, Medford, OR 97501

Telephone (541) 776-7171

FAX (541) 776-7057

E-mail Address: Lorenzo.Mejia@ojd.state.or.us

Lorenzo A. Mejia, Presiding Judge

Dear Representatives,

I am the Presiding Judge of Judicial District 1, for Jackson County. I write to convey our Judicial District's strong support of House Bill 3366. A Family Treatment Court in our county could serve over 15 families providing wrap-around care for parents on the road to recovery and children at risk due to substance abuse and addiction at home. These services will be supported with intensive judicial involvement and oversight of their case by our experienced juvenile judges and staff, and we are prepared to make that investment with your support.

In our county the number of addiction-affected justice system participants has reached new levels of crisis. There is an acute need for unique and appropriately tailored responses to those parents who, due to addiction, risk having their parental rights terminated. In our county, most families who are in the dependency system are touched by substance abuse disorder and lack of resources.

The Family Treatment Court model provides a meaningful alternative to the traditional case management in child welfare cases. Family Treatment Courts are for parents who require treatment for a substance abuse disorder and who are involved with the child welfare system because of alleged child abuse or neglect. This specialty court program combines intensive judicial monitoring with multidisciplinary interventions. By offering treatment, accountability, and supportive opportunities for safe reunification, these programs decrease the amount of time children are in foster care and reduce trauma to both parent and child.

The hallmarks of Family Treatment Courts are collaboration and accountability. Parents engaged in Family Treatment Courts will have treatment providers associated with their case working together to holistically treat the challenges the families are facing through weekly case management meetings. Parents will have their services tailored to their individual needs and family circumstances. The Family Treatment Court builds upon the best qualities of each piece of the system through a model founded upon communication, community effort, and creative problem-solving.

Another important component of Family Treatment Courts is the frequency of case management meetings and check-ins with the judge overseeing the case. No longer will a family have to wait weeks or longer to voice a barrier they are facing because they will receive weekly, continuous support and feedback; no time is wasted. For a child who is in foster care, or a parent whose

child is in foster care, every day counts.

Family Treatment Courts deliver measurable, positive results. Children are less likely to be placed in foster care, parents are more likely to be successful in treatment, and the promise of recovery is real.

I urge you to support House Bill 3366. I thank you for your consideration and welcome any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lorenzo A. Mejia', written in a cursive style.

Lorenzo A. Mejia

Presiding Judge of Judicial District 1, Jackson County