



**CIRCUIT COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON  
Fifteenth Judicial District**

Megan L. Jacquot  
Judge

Coos County Courthouse  
Coquille, OR 97423  
541-396-4115

March 22, 2021  
Testimony before the House Committee on Human Services

Hon. Chair Williams, Vice Chairs Leif and Ruiz, and Members of the Human Services Committee:

I am Megan Jacquot, the juvenile judge for Coos County. Our Court and our juvenile system support HB3366 and Family Treatment Court. In Coos County, we have a natural resource-dependent economy that has never recovered from the recession like the more urban parts of the state. We are at the intersection of several drug-trafficking routes and have significant methamphetamine and opioid epidemics here. Historically, we have had very high *per capita* child abuse and removal rates. In the last two years, 83% of our dependency cases have had at least one substance abuse-impacted parent. These problems are more intractable than others. In cases where the state had to file a termination of parental rights petition, 92% involved substance abuse allegations. 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.

This project has the full support the Model Court Team from Coos County. Model court teams consist of all the stakeholders in the dependency system and meet in every judicial district to work through policies, logistical issues and analyze data with the goal of making our system better for the families that we interact with. At our meeting last Friday, the team expressed unanimous support for HB3366. Since we have been working on this project starting in 2019, we have had many changes: our treatment options have been enhanced with the addition of local medically assisted treatment for opioids; leadership changes at DHS in both the program and regional manager positions have resulted in more support for treatment, innovations and best practices; and finally we have tripled the number of available beds in clean and sober housing in our area. When coupled with our PCRCP case managers and attorneys and our robust CASA program, we have what we believe is an ideal climate for Family Treatment Court. We anticipate that the need for this service for our families will grow.

Ballot Measure 110 has resulted in a lack of available probation resources to deal with treatment needs of our families. Often in the past, parents were involved with the dependency system and the conditional discharge program at the same time. There was a good working relationship with parole and probation and a prioritization of parents for treatment services. Now, PCS-only cases do not come to the attention of the probation department and are not eligible for their funding or services. If we had family treatment court, the judge and team would be able to provide the monitoring, support, accountability and access to services that the system lost. By using proven best practices and focusing on the entire family, we would have our best chance to break the inter-generational cycle of substance abuse and dependency that causes many parents to lose hope that they can parent their children again.

A Family Treatment Court in our county could serve 30-35 families in Coos County 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 judge and staff, and we are prepared to make that investment with your support.

We have so many pieces in place. What we need now is a coordinated response and dedicated court time to address addiction issues early, consistently and with the supportive services that will allow our families to succeed. The Family Treatment Court model provides a meaningful alternative to the traditional case management in child welfare cases. 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 all of the treatment providers associated with their case working together to holistically treat the challenges the families are facing through weekly case management meetings with all stakeholders present. 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. We have a supportive court and frequently problem-solve through review hearings. For these cases during the active treatment phase, it is vital to address barriers before a parent loses motivation to change. People come back from relapses, but the longer they are, the less likely the parent will complete treatment and the longer a child waits, often in foster care.

***Delivering Results, Healing Parents, Protecting Kids***

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 have spoken with the treatment providers in our county including Diedre Lindsey from ADAPT and Steve Sanden from Bay Area First Step and we are united in our support of this bill. I am confident that an investment in our county will yield positive results for families, which in turn, yields results in the strength and well-being of our community.

I urge you to support House Bill 3366. Our Coos County Model Court Team and I thank you for your consideration and welcome any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Megan Jacquot  
Circuit Court Judge