

Submitter: Peggy Thatcher
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

My name is Peggy Thatcher Aguilu, I am a mother, formerly worked in fund development for The United Way, became a small business owner and manager and now I am a CASA – a court-appointed special advocate for foster children who have experienced abuse and neglect. I am a volunteer and I currently work with 4 siblings, ages 11 to 20 who are in separate placements. Their parents, for a number of reasons, are not able to raise them.

Please support Senate Bill 5506. By providing 6.4 million funding to CASA; it will save the State of Oregon money while greatly expanding the number of children who have CASAs in Oregon. This funding will provide the resources for CASA to build the human infrastructure of staff to greatly expand the number of children who have CASAs. On average, children who have CASAs spend less time in foster care. One CASA staff supports 30 volunteers.

Today about half of the 5500+ children who are in foster care have a CASA. We are the volunteer force who do our best to speak for the child, to ensure that the child is not lost in the foster care system ... and in many cases the only continuous presence in the child's life. I have been on this case for 2 years. During that time, there has been a new DHS case worker, new attorney's, new schools, new resource parents. Who a young child becomes is greatly affected by their early years. Please provide additional funding to CASA of Oregon.

Thank you.

Peggy Thatcher Aguilu
CASA, Multnomah County
I attended the 4-8-23 Way and Means Committee Public Hearing
(but was not called to speak)