

April 26, 2023

To Ways and Means Co-Chairs and Committee Members,

I have been a CASA for babies for just over two years. It is imperative that children have a CASA. We are the only avenue that children have for continual support while they are involved in DHS. Jackson County has the highest number of drug abuse in the state of Oregon. Yes, Portland is a bigger city, BUT per capita Jackson County has the highest amount of drug abuse in the state. In addition, Oregon has the highest drug abuse in the nation. Yes, again New York City, Los Angeles have more drug abuse victims, but again per capita Jackson County has the highest drug abuse in the nation. We need at least 250 more CASAS just in Jackson County. We are not satisfying the requirement that every child has a CASA; we are doing our best, but the need is just high. We would need at least 250 more CASAS to ensure that every child has a CASA. PLEASE, PLEASE do not cut our funding, or we will be in even greatest strains that we are at present. Thank you for your time, and for listening. I speak for my CASA babies who are too young to speak for themselves.

Sincerely,

CASA, Mary Lee Wright