

Submitter: David Watson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee
On Public Safety

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5014

I am requesting Legislatures fully fund HB 5014 and HB 3196. Both bills support critical services for vulnerable children in Oregon, including CASAs (Court Appointed Special Advocates). I am a volunteer board member for CASA and get to witness first hand the important work this organization does to mobilize and support CASA volunteers who support some of the most vulnerable children in our community. CASA volunteers work within the courts in collaboration with key agencies, legal counsel, and community resources to ensure that every child in foster care in Central Oregon can transition into a safe and permanent home. CASA is often the only consistent adult presence in a child's life during their time in foster care.

This funding is critical to CASA's ability to serve child victims of crime in Central Oregon. Loss of VOCA funding would result in a significant reduction in the number of volunteer CASAs serving children. This would have terrible implications for the children who need an advocate the most. As a volunteer board member, I also can attest to CASA's responsible and efficient use of all funding received to maximize services supporting these most vulnerable kids in foster care.

Thank you for your consideration, and please do fund HB 5014 and HB 3196.

Respectfully,
Dave Watson