



OREGON HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE

For Immediate Release

Thursday April 18, 2019

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Another oversight board won't solve the problems at DHS

Governor Kate Brown's response to agency's abysmal performance is more talk

SALEM, Oregon – Children in the care of Oregon's dysfunctional foster care system have been anything but safe. Under a succession of Democrat administrations, the agency charged with the care of foster children has failed them time and again.

Governor Kate Brown has responded by establishing yet another advisory board. Gov. Brown has been in office for 1,520 days, more than enough time to evaluate and change the culture that has led to years of abuse and neglect – and the deaths of dozens of children. Another board won't do. The role of the chief executive is to provide oversight and leadership, not to neglect festering issues until they become injurious.

We have all read the tragic news reports of the conditions endured by foster children under DHS supervision. There is no excuse for the negligence that allowed children with physical, intellectual, cognitive or mental health disabilities to be put in deplorable circumstances, even to the extent of having to take refuge in homeless shelters or simply on the streets.

At this point it takes more than good intentions to correct the shambles created by years of inaction. It takes a change of culture, real transparency and accountability that has long been lacking. Lawsuit upon lawsuit, audit upon audit have exposed the agency's mismanagement of its resources and the resulting danger for children in its care.

The Governor's order establishes a "crisis management team." The people of Oregon would be better served if DHS had taken the steps to prevent these outrageous tragedies from the beginning. It's long past time for accountability.

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