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Senator Wagner Champions Bill to Protect Vulnerable Youth in Oregon

SALEM – Today, the Oregon Senate unanimously passed Senate Bill 1568. The bill makes a critical change to help individuals who may qualify for vulnerable youth guardianship. Senator Rob Wagner (D-Lake Oswego) championed the bill and carried it on the Senate floor.

“This bill is about helping and supporting our kids,” said Sen. Wagner. “By allowing Oregon’s vulnerable youth an opportunity to build a relationship with a supportive adult, these young people have a better chance of accessing resources to address their trauma, avoiding homelessness, and continuing on the path to permanent residency.”

Federal law has extended resources to immigrant youth 18 to 21 years of age who have been abandoned, neglected, or abused by a parent. Oregon law has lagged behind. The difference between the jurisdictions creates a gap that puts undocumented youth at risk of further harm. SB 1568 closes this gap by extending the qualification to receive vulnerable youth guardianship to young people without permanent legal immigration status who would be unsafe should they return to their home country.

“Vulnerable youth experience greater stability and less risk of harm when they build a relationship with a trusted and caring adult,” Sen. Wagner said. “Without SB 1568, these youth face uncertain futures. They deserve better.”

Senate Bill 1568 now moves to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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