



## SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

Oregon State Legislature  
State Capitol  
Salem, OR

### NEWS RELEASE

May 29, 2009

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#### **Senate approves legislation protecting Oregon foster children** *HB 3471 requires certain safeguards before children are placed out of the U.S.*

SALEM – A bill that will help protect Oregon children when they are placed with relatives outside the United States passed the Senate this morning. The bill requires Oregon’s Department of Human Services to work with the U.S. Department of State to implement requirements of the Convention on Protection of Children regarding international adoptions.

“We have a moral obligation to make sure Oregon children are placed in safe homes,” said Deputy Senate Majority Leader Laurie Monnes Anderson (D-Gresham), who carried the bill on the floor this morning. “This legislation speaks to the concerns that have arisen about the quality of international adoptions. Giving DHS the tools they need to protect our kids will help address these concerns.”

Worry about the safety of adoption processes in other countries led to the introduction of HB 3471. The bill will help DHS interact with other countries on a more equal basis and with the support of the U.S. Department of State.

“Oregon must do everything within its power to protect those among us who can’t protect themselves. Lives of innocent children are at stake,” said Senate President Peter Courtney (D-Salem/Gervais/Woodburn). “We can no longer count on authorities in other countries to take care of Oregon’s children. As a state we have a legal obligation to make use of all the resources available to protect the children in our care.”

State policy directs DHS to place children with their next of kin to whatever extent possible. While Oregon does not place a significant number of children in international adoptive placements, they do occur when deemed to be in the child’s best interest. From 1999-2008, the Department placed 27 children for adoption outside of the U.S.

“Looking out for Oregon’s vulnerable children in foster care has always been a cornerstone of our caucus’ agenda,” said Senate Majority Leader Richard Devlin (D-Tualatin). “This is an example of policy-making that is responsive to crisis and protects the most vulnerable.”

The bill will now go to the Governor’s desk for approval.

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*For more information on the Senate Majority Caucus, please visit [oregonsenatedemocrats.com](http://oregonsenatedemocrats.com)*