



State Representative Duane Stark House District 4

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Governor Brown Appoints Representative Stark to New Child Foster Care Advisory Group

(Salem) Oregon Governor Kate Brown has appointed [State Representative Duane Stark](#) (R-Grants Pass) to be a member of a special [child foster care advisory committee](#). The panel is charged with overseeing an independent review of the services provided by the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) and other issues involved in the state's child foster care system.

"I'm honored and humbled to be appointed to this new oversight committee," said Representative Stark. "We're talking about the lives of some pretty vulnerable children who have been put into the state's custody for whatever reason. I hope this review will ensure they are getting the best care possible."

"It is encouraging to see Representative Stark appointed to this advisory panel because he brings a unique perspective having been a foster and adoptive parent," said Ben Sand, CEO for the Portland Leadership Foundation, which runs [Embrace Oregon](#), an innovative program which connects families willing to provide homes for children who need foster care. "It's important to have a voice at the table for those who have had to navigate the complexities of partnering with DHS but also know first-hand the rewards of caring for some of Oregon's most vulnerable children. Representative Stark will be a great asset for this group."

The Interim Department of Human Services Director, Clyde Saiki, is in the process of hiring an outside third-party contractor to [conduct an independent assessment](#) to look at abuse investigations, agency communications, licensing and other accountability measures. In her announcement for the new panel the Governor said, "As part of an independent review of the DHS child foster care system, this external advisory committee will provide additional community perspective to the reviewer and oversight of the assessment process."

"Issues that are identified as a result of the independent review in the months ahead could be corrected by DHS without the need for legislative action," explained Representative Stark. "However, I am prepared to work with my colleagues at the capitol to make whatever legislative changes are necessary during the 2016 session to protect Oregon's foster children and improve the system as a whole."

[Click here](#) to see details about the Governor's announcement for the new advisory committee.

Dozens of foster parents and others turned out to provide suggestions for improving the foster care system at a recent Town Hall in Central Point co-sponsored by Representative Stark, the [Jackson County Foster Parent Association](#) and the [Oregon Foster Parent Association](#). During the 2015 legislative session, Representative Stark helped spearhead an important new law ([SB 741](#)) for foster families seeking to adopt children in foster care.

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