

**State Representative
Duane Stark
House District 4**



**State Senator
Sara Gelser
Senate District 8**

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***Bill to Create Governor's Child Foster
Care Commission Gains Support***

(Salem) Several people testified in favor of legislation to create a new Governor's Child Foster Care Commission during a hearing at the state capitol. [House Bill 4080](#) Co-Chief Sponsored by [State Representative Duane Stark](#) (R-Grants Pass) and [State Senator Sara Gelser](#) (D-Portland) was up for a consideration before the House Human Services and Housing Committee.

"I strongly support the concept of a Governor's Commission on Foster Care that prioritizes the safety and well-being of the more than 7,500 children in the state foster care system," Governor Brown said. "I am particularly heartened to see that the proposal requires that the commission be structured in consultation with a diverse array of perspectives."

"My wife and I have been foster parents for several years so we understand first-hand the challenges that families can experience in the current foster care system," explained Representative Stark. "I started working on this idea for a Commission long before the recent controversies involving a few foster care providers in the news. Establishing this commission could give us an ongoing group to keep an eye on issues and hopefully prevent problems in the future."

"This Commission will advise the Governor about how to make our foster care system work best for the kids," explained Senator Gelser. "I'm grateful to Representative Stark's leadership to ensure that foster children get the policy and budget focus they deserve." The Senator has been working on her own legislative reforms ([Senate Bill 1515](#)) to the child welfare and foster care system. Representative Stark and Senator Gelser were both appointed to a [special committee](#) set up by Governor Kate Brown a few months ago to oversee an [independent review](#) of the Department of Human Services (DHS) foster care services.

Under HB 4080 the Commission will be made up of foster parents, foster children advocates, juvenile dependency attorneys, and others who deal with foster care issues. The Commission will study and make recommendations on accountability measurements such as how long children have been in foster care and how often they are transferred from one home to another.

According to the [most recent figures](#) from DHS 11,443 children spent at least one day in foster care during 2014 and on average there were 7,811 kids in foster care on any given day that year. HB 4080 is scheduled for a work session on Wednesday February 10th at 3 pm in Hearing Room D.

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