

**State Representative  
Duane Stark  
House District 4**



**State Senator  
Sara Gelser  
Senate District 8**

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### ***Oregon House Passes Governor's Child Foster Care Commission Legislation***

(Salem) "We need to have an ongoing Commission to monitor Oregon's foster care system," said [State Representative Duane Stark](#) (R-Grants Pass). [House Bill 4080](#), which passed the Oregon House unanimously today, calls for a permanent Governor's Advisory Commission on Child Foster Care to give advice and recommendations on foster care issues. Representative Stark is the Co-Chief Sponsor of [HB 4080](#) along with [State Senator Sara Gelser](#) (D-Corvallis/Albany).

The Department of Human Services (DHS) [estimates](#) more than 7,500 children are in foster care on an average day in Oregon. Among other things, the commission will be charged with monitoring accountability and outcomes to track the number of times children are moved to different foster homes, to reduce the number of incidents of abuse and reduce the length of time children spend in care.

"I am especially comforted to know the commission will assist the Governor to make improvements in DHS procedures for licensing and investigating foster care providers to ensure children are getting the best care possible," said Senator Gelser. Members of the commission could include Foster parents, former foster children, advocates, juvenile dependency attorneys and others with expertise in the foster care system.

"It is important for Oregon to have a group of knowledgeable citizens to oversee Oregon's foster care system, to regularly track its most important outcomes, and to advise the Governor's office on steps for Oregon to do a better job for children and families," said Mark McKechnie Executive Director for Youth, Rights and Justice, a group which offers legal representation and advocacy for children in foster care.

"We support HB 4080 because of the coordinated, holistic perspective the commission would have in recognizing linkages and hydraulics between multiple foster care issues," said Janet Arenz, executive director of the Oregon Alliance of Children's Programs. "There is no single pathway to a solution to the system issues for these children and families. It will take a larger perspective and multiple strategies to make a strong system and even stronger alternatives for families to stay together in safe, healthy homes. The legislation creates this critical opportunity." The Alliance represents many child welfare and foster care programs, including 200 foster parents through the association's member organizations.

[HB 4080](#) now moves to the Oregon Senate for further deliberation.

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