



**REPRESENTATIVE GENE WHISNANT
OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOUSE DISTRICT 53**

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House Unanimously Passes Bill To Adequately Fund Child Abuse Prevention Centers
*Bipartisan Legislation Sponsored By Rep. Gene Whisnant Allows State To Reimburse Centers
For Medical Assessments And Treatment*

Salem, OR – Today, the Oregon House of Representatives unanimously passed House Bill 2234, legislation that works to adequately fund Oregon’s community-based Child Abuse Intervention Centers (CAIC) by clarifying billing codes and processes to allow for the state’s reimbursement of the critical services these centers provide to treat and prevent child abuse.

“These Child Abuse Prevention Centers provide very special services for children who have been abused,” said Rep. Whisnant. “I wish we did not need these centers, but the fact is that 1 in 12 children in Oregon are victims of abuse. Ensuring secure funding mechanisms for the critical medical services and treatments these centers provide will help us protect our youngest and most vulnerable Oregonians who can’t often protect themselves.”

Current law does not cover the reimbursement of CAICs for certain services and treatment, and thus forces these centers to make difficult decisions about how many children they can treat and what kind of treatment they can cover financially. HB 2234 ensures increased, adequate funding for these critical services by requiring the Oregon Health Authority and insurers to adopt billing and payment mechanisms to ensure that the reimbursement is proportionate to the scope and intensity of the services provided by the community assessment center, including, but not limited to a forensic interview of the child and mental health treatment.

According to the Oregon Network of Child Abuse Intervention Centers, there were nearly 11,000 confirmed victims of child abuse in Oregon in 2013, with evidence suggesting many more unconfirmed or unreported cases of abuse. The 21 CAICs of Oregon provide critical medical services and treatment – both physical and mental – to children of all backgrounds who are victims of abuse. Their services range from conducting medical exams and forensic interviews to offering child counseling, family support, prevention classes, supports group and victim advocacy.

“It is important for Oregon families to know that there is always a place to go when they need help,” said Rep. Whisnant, who is a former chair of the Deschutes County Commission on Children and Families as well as a former member of the Oregon Commission on Children and Families.

Under HB 2234, reimbursements will now be available to the 21 CAICs that provide services to more than 6,000 children per year, including:

- ABC House (Linn and Benton Counties)
- Amani Center (Columbia County)
- CARES Northwest (Multnomah and Washington Counties)

- CAIC Serving Coos County (Coos County)
- Children's Advocacy Center of Jackson County (Jackson County)
- Children's Center (Clackamas County)
- Columbia Gorge Children's Advocacy Center (Hood River, Gilliam and Wheeler Counties)
- Douglas CARES (Douglas County)
- Guardian Care Center (Umatilla County)
- Josephine County Child Advocacy Center (Josephine County)
- Juliette's House (Yamhill, Polk and Tillamook Counties)
- KIDS Center (Deschutes, Jefferson and Crook Counties, Warm Springs)
- Kids' First (Lane County)
- Klamath-Lake CARES (Klamath and Lake Counties)
- Liberty House (Marion and Polk Counties)
- The Lighthouse for Kids (Clatsop County)
- Lincoln County Children's Advocacy Center (Lincoln County)
- Mt. Emily Safe Center (Union County and surrounding counties)
- STAR Center/Treasure Valley Pediatric Clinic (Malheur County)

Along with Rep. Whisnant, HB 2234 was chief sponsored by Rep. Brent Barton, Rep. Jodi Hack and Senator Sara Gelser. Additional sponsors include Rep. Knute Buehler, Rep. Margaret Doherty, Rep. Lew Frederick, Rep. John Huffman, Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer, Rep. Betty Komp, Rep. Andy Olson, Rep. Jeff Reardon, Rep. Duane Stark, Rep. Brad Witt, and Senator Richard Devlin. The bill now goes to the Senate for consideration.

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