

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND PUBLIC ADVOCACY

January 18, 2001
1:30 PM

Hearing Room D
Tapes 4 - 6

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rep. Jeff Kruse, Chair
Rep. Bill Morrisette, Vice-Chair
Rep. Bill Garrard, Vice-Chair
Rep. Phil Barnhart
Rep. Jan Lee
Rep. Laurie Monnes-Anderson
Rep. Carolyn Tomei
Rep. Cheryl Walker

MEMBER EXCUSED:

STAFF PRESENT: Diane Lewis, Committee Administrator
Rachel Brown, Committee Assistant

MEASURE/ISSUES HEARD: HB 2035 – Work Session
Overview of Department of Human Services (DHS)
Overview of State Office for Services to Children and Families (SCF)

These minutes are in compliance with Senate and House Rules. Only text enclosed in quotation marks reports a speaker's exact words. For complete contents, please refer to the tapes.

TAPE/#	Speaker	Comments
TAPE 4, A		
006	Chair Kruse	Calls the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. Opens a work session on HB 2035.
<u>HB 2035 – WORK SESSION</u>		
016	Rep. Morrisette	MOTION: Moves HB 2035 to the floor WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION as to passage and BE REFERRED to the committee on School Funding and Tax Fairness/Revenue. VOTE: 8-0 AYE: In a roll call vote, all members present vote Aye. The motion CARRIES.
037	Chair Kruse	<u>OVERVIEW OF DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS)</u>
048	Gary Weeks	Director of DHS. Submits written material (EXHIBIT A). Emphasizes difficulty of decision to leave the department. Praises Bob Minks' capabilities.
084	Weeks	Speaks sentimentally about his job and his agency. Wishes to create a 'true' department in which the State of Oregon would do its best to serve Oregonians from birth to death.
102	Weeks	Outlines goals for DHS in the future: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Merge together separate agencies in the department▪ Develop community-based programs▪ Become outcome-focused

		Remarks that Mr. Minks will need to defend the way in which the department spends money.
150	Weeks	Discusses history of DHS, detailing its 30-year span. Speaks of agency's 'vision' of wanting to treat a family with problems as a family and not simply to focus on the problems it may have. Brings to light many additions and changes in the department.
198	Weeks	Continues testimony by emphasizing the abilities of DHS staff. Stresses the importance of behaving and performing as a department, and not just separate divisions. Advocates for the integration of services, and county-based services. Mentions four counties chosen for county-based service-integration model. Maintains that integrated service sites are the future for DHS, and that clients are better served in this way.
251	Weeks	Underscores the importance of clients having a single case manager. Summarizes DHS' decline in welfare caseload: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More people in the workforce than ever before because people are receiving work training ▪ More people with disabilities are joining the workforce due to the closure of Fairview and the legislation surrounding the federal employment waiver that allows people to work and keep their Medicaid care coverage
298	Weeks	Brings to light new programs for medically fragile children, for example Respite Care and county-by-county safety net programs, that keep children that come from families that aren't caring for them from being handed over to the state.
340	Weeks	Continues testimony by reporting on the safety net program. Confirms that the many changes that have been made in DHS have been supported by the legislature.
382	Chair Kruse	Asks what the rationale was of the 1993 'carving out' of the Employment Department.
384	Weeks	Responds that there was strong feeling among employers that it was important to the development of industries in Oregon that we have a separate employment agency to represent the business community and the labor community.
390	Chair Kruse	Asks why the split happened.
393	Weeks	Responds that the business community especially wished to separate the Employment Department from human resources in order to better cope with the labor force in Oregon.
TAPE 5, A		
018	Chair Kruse	Notes that the caseload has decreased within the Employment Department due to community-based training and hopes that the departments will fuse back together.
039	Weeks	Admits to having had conversations with Mr. Minks on the very same topic and talks about looking outside of the agency for answers to questions of how to improve the agency.
045	Chair Kruse	Asks about pilot counties and family court systems.
052	Weeks	Comments that the judges in the pilot counties have been involved and asked to voice their opinion because of the importance of the courts and their involvement in DHS.
066	Chair Kruse	Advocates for the family court model.
071	Rep. Morrisette	Makes note of pilot projects in the four counties of Coos, Baker, Polk, and Jackson, and asks if these counties contract with the

		state to administer programs.
075	Weeks	Responds that in Jackson County they do contract with the state and admits that he is not sure about the other counties. Provides background information about pilot counties by explaining that these counties were chosen by how receptive their commissioners and judges were to the idea of implementing new programs as well as looking for non-profit agency support. Notes that the counties were chosen on the assumption that they would succeed in the piloting efforts as well as provide diversity to the programs.
090	Rep. Morrisette	Asks if contracted services have been discontinued in pilot counties.
092	Weeks	Responds that the services are still being contracted.
099	Rep. Morrisette	Voices concern for state continued funding of county services.
106	Weeks	Comments that DHS is looking for county and non-profit support more than ever before and is wanting to keep things localized.
113	Rep. Walker	Asks if most services for Jackson County are centered in White City.
117	Weeks	Responds that services for White City are located in the Rogue Valley Family Center as well as the west Medford site. Describes the Rogue Valley Center as being particularly successful. Reports that all the services including public health care, school counseling, the food bank and employment department are under the same roof of the Family Center. States that when clients walk into the center, an entire assessment is done and in the first visit, the family can schedule every type of appointment needed under the one case manager system. Discusses network information system that allows case managers access to many databases.
169	Rep. Walker	Asks if the White City model will be replicated in other counties.
174	Weeks	Responds that there is a great need for designing these integrated systems although each will not look exactly like White City's model. Expresses the importance of a one-stop service system for every county. Explains that services in the same building may not be possible for every center but that due to advanced technology, it will be possible to access all information databases across the board in keeping with the one-stop service system.
201	Chair Kruse	Asks about confidentiality issues.
203	Weeks	Responds that clients can give permission for access and the transfer of data. Indicates that this issue is mainly a federal issue.
225	Rep. Barnhart	Asks if there is a training component in place for these centers.
230	Weeks	Responds that there is a great amount of training involved in order for employees to be well versed in their ability to work across state and county divisional lines.
238	Rep. Morrisette	Asks if Child Link has made any progress.
240	Weeks	Responds that he isn't well-informed about this issue.
248	Rep. Walker	Asks if a county would like to build a White City model center, then would DHS be willing to help out.
251	Weeks	Responds that the department would be willing to pitch in.
266	Chair Kruse	Confirms that the majority of counties in Oregon are moving toward a community-based service system.
268	Weeks	Mentions SB 555 (1999) and relates its instructions to take local planning and build a system resulting from that plan.
286	Chair Kruse	Stresses importance of taking global mapping to the local level.

293	Bob Minks	Deputy Director, DHS. Submits written material (EXHIBIT B). Reports on the DHS reorganization project. Mentions that when the project is outlined and given to the Governor for approval, then the next step will be to take it to the committees. Asserts that one result of the reorganization will be to have a single field management system where the expertise of each case manager will be preserved.
356	Minks	Highlights decision making process that has gone into the reorganization and what action taking process will occur. Notes that there was not much county participation in the reorganization discussion. Wishes to involve local human service directors, mental health directors, consumers and advocates in the discussion. Suggests that legislators consider carefully what is soon to be the new DHS and to give advice whenever possible. Foresees the two biggest obstacles to the reorganization being training and information systems. Adds that teams of people are working on these concerns. Talks about information sharing as a way of better serving clients.
TAPE 4, B 022	Minks	Explains the need for getting away from traditional roles and working together to best serve the 700,000 people that DHS comes in to contact with. Underlines the importance of merging services. Mentions a bill soon to be introduced to committee and says it removes any mention of a division and gives DHS a 'clean slate' with which to work. Asserts that the bill also gives power to the office of the director who will take advice and direction from the Governor and the committees as to how services should be delivered within the department.
065	Chair Kruse	Points out that the House and Senate committees will have a joint meeting to discuss the issues further.

OVERVIEW OF STATE OFFICE FOR SERVICES TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (SCF)

105	Ramona Foley	Administrator for Services to Children and Families (SCF). Submits written material (EXHIBIT C). Explains that Child Link's data collection system has been improved and is now with the Attorney General's office to see if they can give legal advice.
125	Foley	Outlines SCF's vision in being diligent in protecting children and in leaving families better off than when they first came to SCF. Speaks of a checks and balances system in dealing with SCF actions toward families. Advocates for the balance of protecting children as well as allowing parents to do their job in raising their own children.
160	Foley	Addresses volunteers within the system as well as Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAS), and the reinforcement of someone else looking at a particular case along side of another person. Adds that professionals, psychologists, attorneys and others are involved with families needing SCF's services to ensure that the checks and balances system is in place. Refers to EXHIBIT C and discusses abuse and neglect cases.
233	Foley	Makes note of stereotype of the welfare of children and states that not all reported children are removed from their homes.

		Maintains that 69% of child safety cases will actively be served in the child's home. Mentions the Safety Plan development within families that addresses safety issues and what SCF and parents will do to address the problem. Explains that Oregon tries to use a child's relative to house him or her before looking to a foster home to do so.
288	Rep. Monnes-Anderson	Asks about material in EXHIBIT C regarding child welfare.
293	Foley	Responds that there is national data with which to compare Oregon's data in looking at child welfare.
307	Rep. Barnhart	Asks how rate of re-entry and other variables compare with the rate of variables in other states.
318	Foley	Responds that there is no exact answer, but remarks that SCF is always trying to compare their figures to those in other states for the purpose of improving programs. Emphasizes that this data can give an opportunity for accountability.
335	Rep. Morrisette	Anecdotes worse case scenario. Remarks on the safety net program. Asks if more funding is needed for this program and which counties have the program already.
TAPE 5, B		
004	Foley	Responds that the safety net is a dynamic and effective model and that Oregon is unique because it is the only state that has it. Comments that some communities use the exact program while others believe that they can be just as effective by using a modified program.
031	Chair Kruse	Addresses another aspect to the safety net program and that is the fact that remote access to it makes using it difficult for people in rural Oregon.
062	Foley	Responds that programs in remote areas share caseload and work together to most efficiently serve those in need.
083	Rep. Tomei	Asks Ms. Foley to talk about termination of parental rights and at what point the termination happens.
100	Foley	Responds that federal legislation has decided that the system cannot take too long to decide whether the child will go home or stay in foster care. Supports that Oregon has done exceptionally well in being honest with parents insofar as working with them to return their children to them, and that Oregon maintains that the health of a child is at risk when that child is being shuffled around from one home to another. Explains that if a child is put in foster care, that child's parents are notified that parental rights may be taken away after the 15 th month the child has lived in foster care.
129	Chair Kruse	Mentions the adoption task force he created during the 1998 interim.
143	Foley	Remarks on Oregon's task force as one that is ahead of the federal law and has been an exciting thing for Oregon.
147	Chair Kruse	Adds that he is also very pleased with the progress made.
151	Foley	Underlines issues relating to adoption and makes note that she is pushing the system to address these crucial issues. Explains the push for open adoption. Discusses mediation process as non-adversarial decision and remarks again that Oregon is ahead of many other states in dealing with child and family issues.
177	Rep. Tomei	States that she has been a foster parent and points out that in the

183	Foley	Oregonian there are advertisements for children waiting for foster homes and wonders if this is an effective recruitment process. Responds that technological advances like the ads in the paper and on the Internet have in fact been effective in finding foster homes.
192	Rep. Krummel	Asks if a high divorce rate has created the need for more foster care.
202	Foley	Responds that divorce is a factor in many cases, but not a factor by itself. Remarks that when a single parent of a child is turned over to the state, the state has an obligation to be diligent in locating the other parent before taking any permanent action. Notes that divorce does encourage a disjointing in the communication between parents and that a child may come into the system without one parent even being aware of what is happening. Continues testimony by discussing drugs and domestic violence in relation to high risk kids getting referred to the system. Points out that in domestic violence cases, law enforcement becomes involved and will always contact SCF.
260	Rep. Barnhart	Asks about differential recovery rate in treatment.
269	Foley	Responds that there is no official data, but that there are figures on two categories: actual abuse and neglect, and threat of harm.
301	Rep. Krummel	Asks about ‘threat of harm’ and the possibility of a ‘guilty until proven innocent’ charge in the department.
318	Foley	Responds that she is concerned as well about making absolutely sure that a child is being harmed by the parent or guardian before taking action. Believes that there is a great need for due process in which a parent or guardian could challenge the allegation without a need for an attorney. Indicates that SCF is looking at putting together solid and consistent objective criteria for when dealing with alleged perpetrators.
395	Chair Kruse	Explains the reasoning for asking Ms. Foley to speak. Explains that SCF will be part of the DHS reorganization and this is a major concern for a lot of people.
TAPE 6, A		
006	Rep. Morrisette	Voices concerns of his constituents in regards to SCF.
016	Chair Kruse	States that he receives fewer calls regarding SCF issues this session than in the 1999 session.
018	Rep. Monnes-Anderson	Stresses the importance of up and coming legislative action and the importance of using preventative measures to address abuse and neglect.
030	Foley	Agrees that SCF has a huge investment in the service integration concept because if other programs are more effective, SCF will have a smaller caseload.
037	Chair Kruse	Adjourns the meeting at 3:25 p.m.

Submitted By,

Reviewed By,

Rachel Brown,
Committee Assistant

Diane Lewis,
Committee Administrator

EXHIBIT SUMMARY

A – Department of Human Services, written material, Gary Weeks, 2pp.

B – Department of Human Services, written material, Bob Mink, 5pp.

C – State Office for Services to Children and Families, written material, Ramona Foley, 1p.