

“The nature of our job duties has changed dramatically. Our caseloads continue to increase, putting huge demands on frontline workers.”



Yvonne Recchia

DHS, Social Service Specialist,
Portland

In April, the legislature created a new three-person committee on child welfare. In Oregon City and Gresham they shadowed a worker for the day and then listened to testimony from workers and the public in the evening.

DAY CARE AND OTHER SERVICES PROTECTED

Child welfare workers were under attack from other directions. Members Carla Francis, Melany Hammang, Catherine Stearns, and Gina Santacroce testified on proposed cuts to the Children, Adult and Family DHS budget. Carla Francis explains, “JOBS, ERDC, Vocational rehab, food stamps, TANF and positions are all at risk of seeing further cuts and the proposed cuts will impact our ability to serve our clients.”

ATTEMPTS TO CHANGE SYSTEM

Representative Dalto proposed some major changes to the child welfare system. Unfortunately, the resulting bill would have made it harder for child welfare workers and law enforcement to do their jobs.

In spite of the political risks, Representative Chuck Riley (D: Hillsboro) stood with child welfare workers and voted to oppose the unfair bill.

Dalto amended his proposal to a bill drafted by Senator Frank Shields (D: Portland). The Senator sacrificed his own bill to protect SEIU members, and we stopped the damaging proposal in the Senate.

Some of the members who were shadowed by legislators and/or testified at hearings:

OREGON CITY:

Julie LaChapelle
Marcy Cady
Karen Miller

GRESHAM:

Chris Drefs
Yvonne Recchia
Sarah Cochran
Anne Bennet
April Mancini