

State Reps. Levy and Smith Celebrate Passage of Senate Bill 1579

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Senate Bill 1579 passed the Oregon House of Representatives on Thursday. The bill creates the Children's Advocacy Center Fund in the Department of Justice. State Rep. Greg Smith, left, and State Rep. Bobby Levy sponsored the bill. (Photo courtesy of Rep. Smith's office)

Senate Bill 1579 passed the Oregon House of Representatives and was applauded by State Rep. Bobby Levy (R-Echo) and State Rep. Greg Smith (R-Heppner), sponsors of the legislation.

The bill creates the Children's Advocacy Center Fund in the Department of Justice to establish and maintain sufficient children's advocacy centers (CACs) that support children who have been abused. The measure also establishes the Children's Advocacy

Center One-Time Grant Fund in the Department of Justice. Smith said 50 percent of funds are to be distributed equally amongst all 24 of Oregon's CACs.

The other half of the funds are to be made available for application for CACs that are accredited or have an application pending for accreditation through the National Children's Association. SB 1579 having passed both chambers, now awaits the Gov. Tina Kotek's signature.

"These centers are at the forefront of providing crucial services such as forensic interviews, medical evaluations, therapy, and support to child victims of abuse," said Levy. "This legislation will give every center the opportunity to be accredited with the standards and best practices of the National Children's Alliance".

"Children's advocacy centers serve as sanctuaries for vulnerable youth who have endured unimaginable traumas," said Smith. "This critical investment will help ensure equitable access and services for children who have been abused and neglected".