



from the offices of

**REPRESENTATIVE SHELLY BOSHART DAVIS
SENATOR SARA GELSER BLOUIN**

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ABC House Gets Big Boost from State Legislature

SALEM, Ore. – The offices of State Representative Shelly Boshart Davis (R, Albany) and Oregon State Senator Sara Gelser Blouin (D, Corvallis) today announced the passage of HB 5204, the 2025–27 session budget measure that includes \$1 million in capital construction funding for ABC House, the child advocacy center serving Linn and Benton Counties.

Child-Centered Grand Jury Room

The \$1 million state investment will support ABC House’s “Hear Them. Protect Them” capital campaign and help fund the buildout of a dedicated, trauma-informed grand jury room for children at its Albany facility. The total project cost for the building expansion is approximately \$1.97 million, making the HB 5204 allocation a critical anchor for the public–private funding plan that will leverage private donors, foundations, and other sources.

ABC House will use the state funds to expand its facility and create a child-centered grand jury room where children can provide testimony in a setting they already know and associate with safety and support. Currently, children must testify in adult-oriented court and grand jury spaces that can heighten fear and risk re-traumatization during an already overwhelming process.

The new space at ABC House is designed to reduce re-traumatization, support developmentally appropriate communication, and ensure that children have immediate access to wraparound supports such as on-site mental health counseling, calming space, and comfort from Xander, ABC House’s therapy dog. The project was developed in close collaboration with the District Attorney’s Office and county partners to meet both the needs of children and families and the operational needs of the justice system.

Strengthening Community Safety and the Justice System

The expansion will also strengthen multidisciplinary team (MDT) collaboration by providing space for weekly meetings and case staffing among law enforcement, prosecutors, child welfare, medical providers, and victim advocates. This enhanced coordination is expected to increase appropriate referrals, improve case outcomes, and support safer, more effective justice processes for child abuse victims and survivors.

A feasibility study conducted by Contour Strategies confirmed community capacity to support ABC House’s broader \$6.03 million capital and growth campaign, which includes the building expansion, staffing for medical and development roles, and endowment growth. Project design, site planning, and

coordination with key partners are completed to a level that allows construction to move forward promptly once funds are released and remaining dollars are raised.

Construction on the expansion is anticipated to begin in the summer of 2027, with completion expected within 6–12 months, by summer 2028.

Rep. Shelly Boshart Davis (R–Albany) emphasized the importance of centering children’s safety and healing when they interact with the justice system.

“Children who have already endured abuse should have a space dedicated to them and their needs. By bringing grand jury proceedings into the child-friendly environment of ABC House, we are supporting better testimony, better healing, and better justice for kids in our community.”

Sen. Sara Gelser Blouin (D–Corvallis), who sponsored the capital funding request for ABC House, celebrated the investment as a bipartisan commitment to vulnerable children and families.

“ABC House is a critical community resource that not only provides care and healing to children, but it lays the foundation for those kids to seek justice,” said Gelser Blouin. “This project will provide children with the care, support and safe environment they need to retell their stories to a grand jury, making it more likely that those who harm children can be held accountable.”

Karsen O’Bryan, Executive Director of ABC House, expressed gratitude for the Legislature’s support and highlighted how the project will transform the experience of child witnesses.

“We are incredibly grateful for the Legislature’s support and their recognition of how important this work is. This investment reflects a powerful commitment to protecting children. It will fundamentally transform the experience of child witnesses by creating an environment where children feel safe, supported, and cared for while the systems around them work toward accountability and justice.”

About ABC House

ABC House is a nonprofit child advocacy center based in Albany that provides forensic interviews, medical evaluations, counseling, and family support services for children who have experienced abuse or neglect. Its model brings together law enforcement, child welfare, prosecutors, medical providers, and victim advocates to minimize trauma, strengthen investigations, and promote healing for children and their non-offending caregivers.

For more information about ABC House’s “Hear Them. Protect Them. ABC House’s Capital Campaign,” visit: www.abchouse.org

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