

Senator Chuck Riley – Senate District 15

Vote YES on SB 299 – The Children’s Service Districts Bill

Currently there is a lack of program availability along with inadequate funding to provide support outside of school time for children under the age of 18. These programs have demonstrated success in improving child and youth well-being.

Senate Bill 299 would establish a new type of district to provide Children’s Services outside of school time. “Children’s Services” are broadly defined so that a community can customize the services being offered to best meet their children’s unique needs outside of school hours.

What is a Children’s Service District?

- Examples of Children’s Services include, but are not limited to: early childhood, after school & summer programs, which may include culture, arts & music, health & well-being, technology, and development of skills services for children and youth.
- This is a new tool to provide local funding for Children’s Services that occur outside of school time.
- How big is a Children’s Service District? As large or as small as the community wants it to be. The boundary could be a neighborhood, a town, part of a county, a whole county, or parts of multiple counties.
- Communities that are uninterested are under no obligation to form a Children’s Service District, just like they are not obligated to form an irrigation special district under existing law.

How is a Children’s Service District Formed?

If a community wants to establish a Children’s Service District to fund one or more services for children outside of school time, they must:

1. File a petition to form the district in the county in which it would be located including a proposed permanent rate limit for operating taxes sufficient to support the services
2. The petition must be signed by either 10% of registered voters within the proposed district boundary or a minimum of 100 registered voters within the proposed district boundary (whichever is greater)
3. If enough signatures are gathered and filed with the applicable county, the petition is voted on by all registered voters in the proposed district area. Board members would be elected at the same time
4. If passed, a Children’s Service District is formed.

SB 299 allows formation of a Children’s Service District (similar to the Portland Children’s Levy which has passed four times) to fund early childhood, after school, and summer programs (out-of-school-time - O.S.T. - programs). Similar programs have been passed in Seattle, Missouri, San Francisco, and Florida.