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Oregon State Senator Sara Gelser Blouin selected for the 2021 Carl Levin Award for Effective Oversight.



Oregon State Senator Sara Gelser Blouin

12/6/2021 - Oregon State Senator Sara Gelser Blouin is the recipient of the 2021 Carl Levin Award for Effective Oversight. This award recognizes exceptional legislators who conduct bipartisan, fact-based oversight. Previous award winners include South Carolina Representative Weston J. Newton, and the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Chair Richard Burr and Vice Chair Mark Warner. Senator Gelser Blouin is being recognized for her commitment to finding facts, building consensus, and strengthening public trust in legislators as problem solvers.

"I'm so grateful to my many colleagues on both sides of the aisle in Oregon, brave youth, zealous attorneys, and resourceful reporters for what has been truly collaborative

work to uncover abuse and danger in the shadows of the programs serving our most vulnerable kids. I'm humbled that this work is being recognized with this award, particularly by an organization inspired by the great work of Carl Levin," said Gelsner Blouin.

Senator Gelsner Blouin's oversight leadership helped to uncover the facts on a corrupt child foster care contractor, better ensuring vulnerable Oregon children receive care and support. This investigation started after a reporter and several Oregon residents raised concerns about out-of-state child foster care placements. Senator Gelsner Blouin interviewed youth, staff, and regulatory agencies involved in child foster care. She visited facilities across the country to see if services were being delivered as detailed in the contract.

Gelsner Blouin's investigation prompted the State of Oregon to: end placement of children in out-of-state programs, enact legislation eliminating use of prone and supine restraints on children, and become the first state in the nation to regulate independent education consultants that coordinate private placement of children in residential facilities and the transport companies that employ abusive tactics to move children across state lines to wilderness and residential programs. Her relentless focus on using the powers of a legislator to help others throughout this investigation has earned her this recognition from the Levin Center.

"Investigation and oversight are powerful tools that are often overlooked in favor of legislation. The Levin Center is an extraordinary resource to help legislators and Members of Congress elevate this role to achieve better results for the people they represent. I look forward to working with the Levin Center team and colleagues across the country to elevate quality and accountability in services for kids who are aching for a better future," said Senator Gelsner Blouin.

The Levin Center at Wayne Law is named in honor of former U.S. Sen. Carl Levin, Michigan's longest-serving U.S. senator who retired in 2015 after 36 years in the Senate conducting fact-based, bipartisan oversight investigations. The center's mission is to promote high quality oversight in Congress and the 50 state legislatures through oversight workshops, research, events, commentary, and other activities. While the Levin Center is affiliated with Wayne State University Law School, its views do not present the institutional views, if any, of Wayne State University or the Law School.

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