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Senator Chip Shields, Chairman
Committee on General Government,
Consumer and Small Business Protection
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chairman Shields:

AARP Oregon supports passage of House Bill 4038-A.

One of AARP's principles on housing speaks to the need for state and local governments to promote policies and programs that support the creation and maintenance of an adequate supply of affordable rental and ownership housing options to meet the needs of people of all ages, family compositions, and incomes. Manufactured housing plays a critical role in serving the housing needs of older Oregonians who might otherwise find it difficult to live affordably.

Manufactured housing unit owners may own their home but not the underlying land, and their tenure may be threatened if the land is sold. While we still refer to manufactured housing units as mobile homes, these units are not particularly mobile and the costs associated with moving them – if there is another community to move them to - can be prohibitive high. The sale of a mobile home park or community with the potential of rent increases can be particularly threatening to park residents.

Balancing the rights of mobile home park owners – who have purchased and developed land to create an income property – and the rights of the homeowners has always been a difficult issue ... and an ongoing discussion. HB 4038-A is the latest result in that discussion.

The current law governing the park sale process is vague and does not work well for park owners or for park residents. HB 4038-A provides clear timelines and notices to allow residents to compete to buy their parks from willing owners and facilitates resident or non-profit ownership of parks, preserving these communities when a park owners decides to sell. At the same time, HB 4038-A provides a fair process to park owners, comparable to the practices of the private market, and sets out clear and reasonable timelines for each party to negotiate a possible purchase.