



HOUSING SENIORS | CREATING HOPE | PILOTING CHANGE

February 1, 2016

Re: HB 4042 - General Assistance Pilot Project

Dear House Human Services and Housing Committee Members:

I write in support of HB 4042 to request funding for a pilot project to assist very poor disabled adults. I work for a small social service agency in Portland which assists 1,500 older adults (age 55+) each year who are experiencing a housing crisis. Many are disabled, have no income, and have applied for social security benefits. It often takes a few years to be approved for social security disability benefits.

The General Assistance program was funded in Oregon prior to 2005. This program helped thousands of disabled adults to have an income and pay for housing while awaiting approval for social security. It has been more difficult to help our older disabled clients between the ages of 55-64 to escape homelessness and afford housing since the General Assistance program was discontinued.

The GA program is an important tool for reducing the homelessness and suffering of very poor disabled adults. Best of all, a significant portion of state funding on the GA program is reimbursed by the federal Social Security Administration.

Please support funding for a pilot GA program as an interim step to future full restoration of the GA program.

Appreciatively,

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