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**HB 4042 Testimony of John Mullin, (503) 867-6236
House Human Services and Housing Committee February 3, 2016**

Madam Chair, members Committee, for the record, my name is John Mullin and I am a Legislative Advocate for the Oregon Law Center.

I am here today in support of HB 4042, related to the General Assistance (GA) program. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. It is my hope that this committee will hold a work session soon, and send the bill on to Ways and Means with a “do pass” recommendation.

As you know from our testimony in the past, and from the General Assistance study funded in 2014, we are not serving this population adequately since GA was defunded in 2005. This lack of funding has created huge problems for many low income people with significant disabilities, while also having a subsequent impact on other state and local programs and resources.

HB 4042 is virtually identical to HB 2194 from the 2015 session, with the exception of the fact that we have dropped the evaluation and the pilot language from the bill. The new GA project would work as follows:

Consumers of the Oregon Health Plan who are determined to have a disability by the Department of Human Services (DHS) Presumptive Medicaid Disability Determination Team (PMDDT), and who are identified by the Department of Human Services as homeless would be eligible. DHS staff will contact these consumers, offering housing assistance and personal incidental funds, and assisting consumers to apply for, and secure federal Social Security Administration disability benefits. The caseload will be capped at a maximum monthly average of 200 cases.

Preliminary fiscal information from DHS anticipates a cost of \$1.7 million GF for this biennium. DHS will present a formal fiscal when the bill goes to work session.

Finally, I would simply add that we have widespread community support for this project, ranging from AARP Oregon to Welcome Home.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to your support.

