

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, statement not yet issued

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<b>Action:</b>	Do Pass as Amended, Be Printed Engrossed and Be Referred to the Committee on Ways and Means by prior reference
<b>Vote:</b>	6 - 0 - 1
<b>Yeas:</b>	Cowan, Gilliam, Kotek, Maurer, Olson, Tomei
<b>Nays:</b>	0
<b>Exc.:</b>	Gelser
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Andy Smith, Administrator
<b>Meeting Dates:</b>	3/16, 4/20

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:** Creates the General Assistance Program Fund as part of the Treasury, separate and distinct from the General Fund. Specifies that interest earned by the General Assistance Program Fund shall be credited to the fund and that all moneys in the fund are continuously appropriated to the Department of Human Services and may be used only to provide grants of general assistance under ORS 411.710 to 411.730. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- General assistance funds cuts in previous years
- Fiscal startup costs to restore level of services available prior to 2003
- Department recommended amendment to clarify that program is only for adults
- Length of Supplementary Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance appeals process
- Benefits levels

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:** Replaces original measure.

**BACKGROUND:** Historically, the purpose of the General Assistance program had been to help support residents of Oregon who have no source of income, have disabilities, and who are pursuing Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits. Recipients were provided: *monthly cash assistance* to enable them to meet their basic requirements for a standard of living compatible with decency and health; *medical assistance* to meet ongoing health needs and to pay for medical documentation necessary to establish eligibility for SSI or SSDI benefits; and *case management services* to assist recipients in successfully qualifying for SSI or SSDI benefits.

House Bill 3139-A restores monies for the General Assistance Program, which has undergone a series of funding reductions since 2003.