

Written Testimony of Barbara H. Ferguson
15462 SW Fountainwood PL.
Tigard, Oregon 97224

Testimony, Public Hearing
HRC 17

INTRODUCTION:

Barbara Ferguson moved to Tigard Oregon in 1979. She is the mother of one grown son and grandmother of two little girls, Barbara taught elementary school for 36 years, 15 years in Fair Oaks CA, and 21 years in the Tigard-Tualatin School district. She retired from teaching in 2000, and when she isn't at the gym or playing golf, she works part-time as a seasonal employee at the Reserve Vineyards and Golf Club in Aloha, Or.

CANCER JOURNEY:

In late April of 2011, Barbara saw a pulmonary specialist to be checked for possible asthma. After a chest x-ray, CT scan, and bronchoscopy, she was diagnosed with inoperable, non-small cell adenocarcinoma, stage IIB, lung cancer. Since then, Barbara has gone through three different rounds of chemotherapy, a total of 31 infusions, plus 36 radiation treatments. The cancer is slow growing, but has spread from the top lobe of her right lung into the middle lobe, and now into the left lung. Since she has been given most of the usual chemotherapy drugs for lung cancer, her oncologist sent her to OHSU to be entered into a clinical trial. She received her first treatment just yesterday.

MISSION:

After surviving the first nine months of treatment, Barbara decided that she wanted to find ways to help raise awareness of the facts of lung cancer. She applied for, and received, a proclamation from the governor's office declaring November as lung cancer awareness month in Oregon. With the help of another lung cancer patient, and the widow of a lung cancer patient, a website was created and launched: www.oregonlungcancerawareness.org. Barbara is also an advocate for early detection efforts in people with a high risk for the disease. Her prognosis would likely be far better had she been given a low dose CT scan in the years leading up to her diagnosis. The work continues, there is much to do.