

February 18, 2013

Rep.vicki-berger@state.or.us Rep. Vicki Berger, Vice Chair, House Revenue Committee

Re: HB 2510 & HB 2507 - Senior Property Tax Deferral Program

I am an Oregon native. My husband and I have been responsible, hard working tax-paying citizens our entire adult lives. We love Oregon and have never considered living and retiring elsewhere.

We are not eligible for or have ever received assistance with utility bills, food or cost free medical care. My husband has a pacemaker and is required to take several very expensive heart medications daily.

Several years ago we realized we most likely would not be able to afford to remain in the home we built in 1996. With rising costs of food, fuel, utilities, auto and homeowners insurance, medical insurance and co-pays, our retirement income of below \$30,000 a year would not be enough to cover all our expenses.

We researched several options. After several months of research we decided to look at the reverse mortgage option. With very careful budgeting, we calculated with the reverse mortgage and the Senior Property Tax Deferral Program we would be able to remain in our home. The loss of this deferral would amount to a \$330 a month increase in living expenses that we are unable to afford.

We were shocked to receive notice in the fall of 2011 that we were no longer eligible for the deferral program due to the reverse mortgage. We knew that depending on how rapidly costs rise it was just a matter of time before we lost our home.

I testified at the hearing on January 20, 2012. We were greatly relieved to receive notice of reinstatement in May, 2012. We really appreciate your efforts on our behalf.

We have been notified that the Senior Property Tax Deferral Program is now sustainable. We are now asking that the reinstatement be made permanent. We are in the same situation as we were a year ago with cost of living rising even more rapidly than anticipated.

We are aware that other states have programs for seniors that offset or eliminate the bulk of property tax. We are asking for your support of HB 2510 and HB 2507.

Sincerely,

Gerald & Bonnie Arnold

503-371-6400

