



February 19, 2015

Senator Alan Bates  
Representative Nancy Nathanson  
Joint Subcommittee on Human Services  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Street  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co Chairs Bates and Nathanson and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of O4AD, the Oregon Association of Area Agencies on Aging and Disabilities, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the budgets for the Aging and People with Disabilities (APD) Division of the Department of Human Services. Area Agencies on Aging and Disabilities, working statewide and in all counties, work closely with the Department in our collective goal to serve Oregon's seniors and people with disabilities. Area Agencies, set forth in Federal Statute, are providing the Older Americans Act programs as well as Oregon Project Independence, the Aging and Disability Resource Connection and are administering the Medicaid program for long-term services and supports in over 50% of the state.

The Co-Chairs Budget Framework recommends continuing the investments made by the Legislature during the 2013-15 biennium which was a solid step forward in investing in the independence, dignity, choice and safety for our vulnerable citizens after many biennium of cuts and reductions. Oregon has a long-standing commitment to enhancing the lives of our seniors and people with disabilities. We have created innovative programs that will continue to improve the well-being of those we serve, lower overall health care costs and continue to focus on prevention and early intervention.

Area Agencies on Aging and Disabilities in Oregon are currently implementing a number of initiatives that were made possible through 13-15 investments:

- Evidence Based Health Promotion & Disease prevention for seniors and people with disabilities
- Evidence Based Mental Health programs for seniors and people with disabilities
- Options Counseling for seniors, people with disabilities, their families and caregivers
- Gatekeeper Program
- Needed expansion of Oregon Project Independence for seniors
- Pilot project to expand services through Oregon Project Independence for people with disabilities

The 13-15 biennium also made critical investments in infrastructure. Workload based staffing has began to be implemented for the APD programs as well as attaining statutorily-called for equity for Area Agencies administering Medicaid long-term care programs. Investing in infrastructure helps insure our programs are run with integrity and efficiency.

We ask that the Joint Subcommittee on Human Services work to continue these important investments in the 15-17 biennium, along with other key initiatives including caregiver training, public guardian/conservator programs, Alzheimer's resources and special needs transportation. Your work to continue Oregon's values of independence, dignity and choice for our seniors and people with disabilities is making a difference in our state and can continue throughout the biennium and far beyond.

Thank you for your consideration.



Rodney Schroeder

Chair, O4AD

Executive Director – Operations. NorthWest Senior & Disability Services (Marion, Polk, Clatsop, Yamhill, Tillamook)