



March 26, 2015

Senator Chip Shields, Co-Chair
Representative Jennifer Williamson, Co-Chair
Members of the Ways and Means Public Safety Subcommittee

Re: Support for Department of Justice Elder Abuse Resource Prosecutor

Dear Senator Shields, Representative Williamson, and Members of the Subcommittee,

On behalf of the Governor's Commission on Senior Services, I would like to express our support for funding of an Elder Abuse Resource Prosecutor within the Department of Justice.

Despite Oregon's laws criminalizing acts of elder abuse, many such cases are never reported. In some cases, victims of abuse may have cognitive impairment. In many cases, the abuser may be a trusted friend, family member, or care provider. These and other complex circumstances make the prosecution of elder abuse cases extremely challenging.

The creation of an Elder Abuse Prosecutor can help to change this reality. The person in this position will work with fellow prosecutors, law enforcement, and other community partners through the provision of training and education, technical assistance, and outreach.

Funding this position will mean greater advocacy and protection for older Oregonians who are victims of abuse and neglect. It is critical to provide dedicated counsel to older citizens who are in situations in which they are unable to protect themselves due to physical and/or cognitive challenges. Thank you for your support of this important position.

Sincerely,

Judy Strand
Chair, Governor's Commission on Senior Services