



May 7, 2015

Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction
900 Court Street NE
Room H-178
Salem OR 97301

Committee Co-Chairs and Members of the Subcommittee:

The Elders in Action Commission is a senior advocacy council that advises the City of Portland, Multnomah County and Multnomah County Aging, Disabilities and Veterans Services on issues affecting older adults in Multnomah County. As such, we support affordable, high quality health care, housing, nutrition and transportation services for older adults and adults with disabilities.

The Elders in Action Commission supports the passage of HB 5005, as it will provide much needed funding for housing in Oregon. As part of Elders in Action's Personal Advocate Program, we provide free, personalized, problem-solving assistance and support to people age 60 and older and people with disabilities. We receive about 250 calls a month from older adults in the Portland tri-county area. Half of these are from individuals seeking housing. Some are being evicted for no cause, some are having a hard time paying their rent because it exceeds their total monthly income and others are homeless and looking for a place to live.

One recent caller in his eighties noted that he had an income of \$1,000 a month and had been paying rent of \$1,100 for many years, resulting in a complete depletion of his savings. Our search for available housing at a rate that he could now afford turned up no options within the next few years in the Portland area. This is a very familiar story and one that we hope the passage of HB 5005 will begin to mitigate.

We strongly urge the passage of this urgently needed funding bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Gentile". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Bill Gentile
Chair
Elders in Action Commission

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