



February 3, 2016

TO: Representative Alyssa Keny-Guyer, Chair
House Committee on Human Services and Housing
FR: Bob Joondeph, Executive Director
RE: HB 4042

Disability Rights Oregon (DRO) is Oregon's federally-funded *Protection and Advocacy* office that provides legal-based advocacy services to Oregonians with disabilities.

Since Oregon's General Assistance program was eliminated in 2005, a group of individuals who are desperately poor and significantly disabled have been a tragic and unnecessary daily reality on our city streets and in our more rural communities. In addition to the human cost, governmental and charitable programs that have stepped up to help have carried difficult financial burdens.

HB 4042 provides a significant step toward addressing this human hardship. By its terms, homeless people who use the Oregon Health Plan and are determined to have a disability will be offered housing assistance, personal incidental funds, and assistance in applying for and securing federal Social Security Administration disability benefits. The caseload for the program will be capped at a maximum monthly average of 200 cases.

DRO urges this committee to move HB 4042 with a "do pass" recommendation to the Ways and Means Committee.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.