



February 8, 2016

House Committee on Judiciary

Chairman Baker and Members of the Committee:

The Elders in Action Commission is a senior advocacy council that advises the City of Portland 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 Commission believes in a barrier-free society for full participation in civic life that provides opportunity for access to stable and appropriate support services and human rights protections for everyone.

HB 4013 would authorize the establishment of multidisciplinary fatality review teams, on the County or statewide level, to assist local organizations and agencies in identifying and reviewing fatalities involving abuse or neglect of elderly or vulnerable persons. We have been following the work of the state Elder Abuse Task Force and believe that Multnomah County has emerged as a leader in addressing the needs of vulnerable elders in our state. But even effective programs or public services must have the essential resources necessary to do the work. Failure to train human services, law enforcement and justice staff will mean that information essential to saving the lives of elders who have suffered abuse will be lost.

HB 4013 provides an effective tool to our public agencies in the form of elderly and vulnerable person fatality review teams that are proven methods for improving multidisciplinary coordination, identifying systems barriers, and improving protection for vulnerable individuals. We look forward to the positive results of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Hansche
Chair, Elders in Action Commission