

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**House Committee On Human Services and Housing****Fiscal:** Fiscal impact issued**Revenue:** No Revenue Impact**Action Date:** 02/08/16**Action:** Do Pass And Be Referred To Ways And Means By Prior Reference**Meeting Dates:** 02/03, 02/08**Vote:**

Yeas: 8 - Buehler, Evans, Gallegos, Hayden, Keny-Guyer, Piluso, Stark, Taylor

Exc: 1 - Parrish

Prepared By: Adam Crawford, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes general assistance project (GA project). Appropriates funds. Limits participation in GA project to 200 individuals. Sets qualification standards for participation. Requires benefits to be paid back after participant receives federal benefits. Directs Department of Human Services (DHS) to convene advisory group to develop metrics to evaluate efficacy of GA project.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- History and previous operation of general assistance programs in Oregon
- Current number of possible participants
- Average length of time necessary to apply for and receive federal SSI or SSDI benefits

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

A general assistance program existed under previous Oregon law. The program provided flexible benefits to participants who met impairment and financial eligibility criteria, and who qualified and were applying for federal disability benefits. State program benefits included cash assistance, Oregon Health Plan Plus eligibility, and case management to help qualify for federal disability benefits. That general assistance program was defunded and closed as of September 30th, 2005.

House Bill 4042 would establish a general assistance project (GA project) to serve no more than 200 participants who are homeless, enrolled in a medical assistance program, and have a disability that would qualify for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits. The benefits of the GA project could be used for housing assistance, personal incidentals, or assistance applying for SSI or SSDI benefits. The benefits given through the GA project would be recovered when the participant received SSI or SSDI benefits. At that time, the participant would be removed from the GA project.