

Testimony in Support of HB2622
Submitted by: Pamela Leavitt, Northwest Credit Union Association
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HB2622 is a bill that, among many things, authorizes financial institution to refuse certain financial transactions when financial institution reasonably believes financial exploitation of vulnerable person may have occurred, may have been attempted or is being attempted.

According to the National Center on Elder Abuse, between two and five million seniors are subjected to the improper use of their funds, property, or assets each year. Many cases of elder abuse go unreported because victims fear loved ones will be arrested, as perpetrators tend to be caregivers or family members.

Elder financial abuse includes a broad range of actions, and can be defined as the illegal or unauthorized use of an older person's property, money, pension, or other valuables occurring in a relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person. Perpetrators of this type of abuse include anyone in a position of control or authority such as a partner, child, or other relation, a friend or neighbor, a volunteer worker, or a health, social care or other worker.

Credit unions are among those that have the ability to first detect changes in the behaviors of their members with whom they have regular contact. Recognizing elder financial abuse is a crucial step in combating this abuse, our diligent training will put credit unions in a position that will help their elderly members and continue to allow credit unions to uphold their members' trust.

HB2622 would be helpful to credit union operations because under current law credit unions cannot legally refuse to honor certain financial transactions when the credit union reasonably believes financial exploitation of a vulnerable person may be attempted. By being able to refuse the transaction while the proper State Authorities are investigating the situation, the credit unions are better able to help stop the financial exploitation before the vulnerable person before the loss occurs.

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