

# House Joint Memorial 4

Sponsored by Representative KENY-GUYER, Senators MONNES ANDERSON, KNOPP; Representatives BARKER, BARNHART, DOHERTY, GOMBERG, KENNEMER, PARRISH, SMITH WARNER (Pre-session filed.)

## SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Urges Congress to pass RAISE Family Caregivers Act.

## JOINT MEMORIAL

To the President of the United States and the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled:

We, your memorialists, the Seventy-ninth Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

Whereas family caregivers, by performing daily tasks as wide-ranging as meal preparation and medical care management, are vital to enabling older adults and persons with disabilities to remain living in their homes and communities; and

Whereas there are approximately 469,000 family caregivers in Oregon; and

Whereas family caregivers in this state annually provide an estimated 437 million hours of unpaid care, at an economic value of \$5.7 billion; and

Whereas providing care to a loved one creates a financial burden on family caregivers, with the average caregiver spending \$6,954 per year in out-of-pocket costs, nearly 20 percent of the caregiver's income; and

Whereas low-income family caregivers suffer a heavier financial blow, spending, on average, amounts that approach 45 percent of their income; and

Whereas further financial strains associated with family caregiving arise from such factors as needing to cut back on hours at work, take unpaid leave, retire early or even quit a job; and

Whereas many family caregivers report that caregiving has caused them to resort to adverse financial strategies, such as withdrawing savings, cutting back on personal spending, decreasing contributions for retirement and taking out loans, to make ends meet; and

Whereas nearly 40 percent of family caregivers feel their caregiving situation is highly stressful; and

Whereas the emotional toll rises as the amount and duration of care, the performance of medical or nursing duties and the perceived lack of choice in taking on the caregiver role increase; and

Whereas chronic stress caused by family caregiving may have negative health impacts for the caregiver, including depression, psychological distress, decreased self-care and poorer physical health; and

Whereas in the workplace, family caregivers often face losing earnings, job security, promotions, health insurance and employer retirement contributions; and

Whereas for employers, annual costs associated with family caregivers without adequate support

**NOTE:** Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 average \$2,110 per full-time working caregiver, due to absenteeism, employee replacement, workday  
2 distractions and related issues; and

3 Whereas respite care is temporary, short-term care that provides relief from the intense de-  
4 mands put on family caregivers; and

5 Whereas research demonstrates that respite care reduces the stresses of family caregiving and  
6 improves well-being for both the giver and receiver of care; and

7 Whereas caregiver training, respite care and other supports are powerful tools that make an  
8 intensely difficult job easier and enable family caregivers to carry on with their responsibilities,  
9 prevent burnout and injury, better manage the variety of duties in their charge and provide the best  
10 care possible to their loved ones; and

11 Whereas the Oregon Caregiver Respite Work Group, formed to learn ways to support this state's  
12 family caregivers, has advanced a goal of fostering stronger infrastructure for respite care that will  
13 serve the needs of family caregivers and the persons to whom they provide care; and

14 Whereas the Oregon Caregiver Respite Work Group has developed a set of recommendations for  
15 improving education and awareness, increasing the supply of respite providers and making respite  
16 services more affordable; and

17 Whereas in addition to Medicaid, Oregon has two major programs, the federally funded Family  
18 Caregiver Support Program and the state-funded Oregon Project Independence, in place to provide  
19 respite and support services to caregivers; and

20 Whereas demand for these programs is high, but funding is limited, and more needs to be done  
21 to improve the plight of family caregivers; and

22 Whereas the federal Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage (RAISE) Family Caregivers  
23 Act would direct the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop, maintain  
24 and update a National Family Caregiving Strategy that would bring together the public and private  
25 sectors to recognize family caregivers, coordinate information and identify actions that can be taken  
26 to address training, respite options, workplace time-off, out-of-pocket costs, balance of workplace and  
27 caregiving demands and other issues associated with family caregiving; now, therefore,

28 **Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:**

29 That we, the members of the Seventy-ninth Legislative Assembly, recognize the compassionate  
30 and difficult work done by family caregivers in Oregon and throughout the United States and ap-  
31 preciate the efforts of the Oregon Caregiver Respite Work Group and will consider the recommen-  
32 dations presented; and be it further

33 Resolved, That we respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to pass, and the President  
34 to sign, the RAISE Family Caregiver Act as a bipartisan approach to creating a National Family  
35 Caregiving Strategy; and be it further

36 Resolved, That a copy of this memorial be sent to the President of the United States, to the  
37 Senate Majority Leader, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and to each member of the  
38 Oregon Congressional Delegation.

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