



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF OREGON**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 97-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

February 7, 2018

To: House Committee on Early Learning and Family Supports
Representative John Lively, Chair
Representative Daniel Bonham, Vice Chair
Representative Carla Piluso, Vice-Chair

Re: **HB 4081** – Temporary Assistance to Needy Families - **Support**

The League of Women Voters has a national position on meeting basic human needs. Persons who are unable to work, whose earnings are inadequate or for whom jobs are not available have the right to an income and/or services sufficient to meet their basic needs for food, shelter and access to health care.

The current benefit levels for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) does not meet the basic needs of a family. The benefits do not cover the current costs to rent housing in most communities. Many families have to double up or live with friends or relatives. In some cases, they cannot find housing they can afford and are homeless. In fact, the grant levels are contributing to the homeless problems in the state today.

This bill asks to use savings in the TANF program to increase the amount of cash grants equal to the value of grants in 1996. Inflation should have increased the grants considerably since that time. The state has provided food programs, health care, and some child care while in training, but most families cannot survive without a cash grant for rent, utilities and other essential needs. Isn't it time to increase grant levels to allow for the rises in costs of housing, utilities and essentials like medications?

How can we expect a parent to concentrate on work training when they are living within such a tight budget? Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Handwritten signature of Norman Turrill in black ink.

Norman Turrill
LWVOR President

Handwritten signature of Karen Nibler in black ink.

Karen Nibler
LWVOR Social Policy Coordinator