

HB 4081 TANF SAVINGS

Chair Lively and members of the committee:

The Oregon Women's Rights Coalition supports HB 4081 which would retain funds allocated the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families in the program to make the program stronger and provide a more stable resource for families who are experiencing lack of resources to provide for their families.

The stipend for a family of three of \$506 would not even cover the cost of a studio apartment in Salem (\$600) or Milwaukie (\$900) let alone a one or two bedroom in either location. I could find no apartment listing for Ontario but could find something for \$450 in La Grande.

Programs to help these struggling families have been curtailed since the cuts to the program in 2001 and since then have sustained cuts during the Great Recession to programs that could help these families and break the cycle of poverty.

Savings because some families have been able to find jobs during the continued upturn in the economy should remain with the program.

Those families that lack the skills necessary to find jobs in the current employment environment need training and education to lift their families out of poverty.

Funding for basic needs, a roof over a family's head, should also have a priority for savings that are realized from this program.

Our organization stands ready to work with the Department as we have in the past to strengthen the programs that work to bring families into the job stream and out of poverty.

Marcia Kelley

Public Policy Advocate