

March 11, 2019

Chair Barker and Members of the House Committee on Business and Labor:

Elders in Action is a nonprofit organization that educates, advocates for, and serves low income older adults in Clackamas, Washington and Multnomah Counties through the active engagement of volunteers. As an organization that works for and with older adults on a regular basis, we hear stories from seniors regularly about perceived age discrimination in hiring practices. We urge you to support HB 2818 which would decrease age discrimination by employers in Oregon.

As our older adult population increases and lives longer, employment in our later years has become a necessity for some and a choice for many. HB 2818 would make it easier for older adults to compete for positions by “banning the box” and requesting applicants’ age on employment forms. In addition, this bill would provide stronger recourse to those taking action against employers for alleged discrimination.

In an AARP survey of adults over age 40, as many as 62% reported being asked age-related information on employment applications. Skill and experience, not age, should drive employment decisions.

We urge you to pass HB 2818 to strengthen Oregon’s rules governing equitable employment practices and ensure our state is a model for thriving, multi-generational workplaces.

Thank you for considering this important bill.

Sincerely,

JoAnn Herrigel
Deputy Director