

## Family Caregiver Respite (RELIEF) – SB 1035

Family Caregivers are the greatest asset to the Medicaid system. In Oregon, about 470,000 unpaid family caregivers provide about \$5.7 billion worth of care annually. However, the financial, physical, and emotional stresses of providing care to a loved one takes a significant toll on caregivers. In 2017, the estimated increase in health care costs for caregivers of Oregonians with Alzheimer's disease was \$130 million.

**Allowing caregivers to get some respite – breaks from providing constant care – will lead to *lower health care costs, better care for their loved ones, and delayed entry into Medicaid and higher levels of care settings.***

According to a survey of 900 Oregon voters aged 40+ conducted by AARP in the Fall of 2018, 71% of current and former caregivers reported emotional stress, and 75% say they would find respite helpful to them. Furthermore, 83% of those surveyed said that they support providing respite to Oregon caregivers.

**RELIEF (REspite: Living Independently, Energizing Families), Senate Bill 1035** is a concept that would create a new eligibility category and benefit package for people who are “at risk” of needing long-term services and supports in the future who don't currently meet Medicaid financial eligibility criteria (up to 400% of federal poverty level). The benefit would be limited to \$500 per month that can be used for Adult Day Services, Home Care Services, or other approved services that provide a caregiver with a break from caregiving. Oregon could construct a sliding fee scale so that those of higher incomes would be able to “buy-in” to these services.

SB 1035 directs DHS Aging and People with Disabilities to convene stakeholders to develop a program and a Medicaid waiver proposal to provide respite to Oregon's family caregivers.



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