



Andrea Meyer, Director of Government Relations
Testimony in support of HB 2008
House Committee on Business & Labor
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AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With over 500,000 members in Oregon, AARP works to strengthen communities and advocate for what matters most to families, with a focus on health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. This includes educating and protecting older Oregonians against fraud and supporting legislation that advances important consumer protections.

AARP supports HB 2008, the Family Financial Protection Act of Oregon. This bill provides a pathway for families to recover following unexpected financial hardship rather than being pushed further into debt and poverty.

Debt collection is the most common type of civil case. This increase corresponds to rapidly rising debt loads, high credit card fees and the economic downturn. Studies show that consumers who have attorneys are more likely to win their case or reach a mutually agreeable settlement, yet fewer than 10% of consumers have such representation compared with nearly all plaintiffs. Debt collection lawsuits exact a heavy toll on consumers, including accrued interest and court fees, garnishment of wages, a ban on accounts, and seizure of personal property.

HB 2008 provides common sense protections for Oregonians, especially as they contend with rising inflation and increased costs of living. HB 2008 updates Oregon debt collection law by raising the minimum protected wage amount (just above what HUD considers a "low-income" family in Oregon), protects access to housing by updating the housing exemption and leaving a minimum amount in bank accounts to cover rent and essential needs, protect the ability to ensure a working car, provide consumers the same amount of time to pursue legal action for unlawful debt collection that collectors currently have to pursue a debt and remove barriers to justice by ending consumer liability that puts them at financial risk for pursuing good faith cases of unlawful debt collection practices

AARP urges your support of HB 2008.