



February 17, 2025

BOARD OFFICERS:

2025 CHAIR:
TOM HOFFERT
Salem Area Chamber

CHAIR ELECT:
CARMELLE BIELENBERG
Stayton Sublimity Chamber

SECRETARY/TREASURER:
ELI MATTHEWS
Medford/Jackson County
Chamber

PAST CHAIR:
LISA FARQUHARSON
The Dalles Area Chamber

**BOARD MEMBERS AT
LARGE:**

BETTINA HANNIGAN
Florence Area Chamber

HEATHER HARTER
Klamath County Chamber

VONNIE MIKKELSEN
Springfield Area Chamber

JIM PAINO
Cannon Beach Chamber

CHERI ROSENBERG-LABOY
Pendleton Area Chamber

Dear Chair Grayber and members of the House Labor and Workplace Standards Committee,

The Oregon State Chamber of Commerce (OSCC) **opposes HB 3187.**

The OSCC represents 89 chambers of commerce statewide. These chambers represent local business communities from every corner of the state who are the backbone of their local communities and provide the goods, services, jobs, taxes and philanthropy that fuel our economy.

Oregon currently has one of the clearest and most comprehensive age discrimination laws in the nation. Existing age discrimination laws provide broad protections for workers over 18 for age-based discrimination, and the state's Equal Pay Act ensures fair compensation across all protected classes, including age.

HB 3187 takes a relatively simple and clear law and makes it complex and confusing. It will spur lawsuits and litigation.

HB 3187 would significantly expand the scope of age discrimination claims to include additional claims for older workers, creating new legal risks for small businesses. By allowing salary, experience, and retirement status to serve as "proxies" for age discrimination, the bill would open the door to more exploratory lawsuits, where routine salary-related complaints could be reframed as age discrimination. Rather than protecting employees, HB 3187 would primarily burden small businesses with unnecessary legal uncertainty and risk.

Oregon's small businesses are already have it hard enough with inflation, economic uncertainty, and workforce shortages. HB 3187 is yet one more costly challenge that would only add more complexity and more avenues for lawsuits.

Please, let's not make turn a simple and clear age discrimination law into a confusing one. It costs tens of thousands of dollars to litigate discrimination claims, even when successful or even when the claim is without merit. There is no demonstrable need for this bill.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "JL Wilson".

JL Wilson
Legislative Counsel