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Date: February 3, 2026

To: Co-Chair Lieber, Co-Chair Sanchez, and members of the Joint Way & Means Committee

From: LeadingAge Oregon

LeadingAge Oregon is an association of housing and long-term care providers serving older adults throughout Oregon.

Nearly 50 years ago, Oregon led the nation by creating a model of care that prioritizes independence, choice, and dignity, allowing care to be delivered in homes and communities. This system remains a lifeline for Oregon families and depends on sustained investment.

Today, that future is at risk as the Legislature rebalances the state budget and identifies sustainable solutions to fund essential services and protect vulnerable Oregonians.

As budget modifications are considered, we urge policymakers to prioritize protecting programs that serve older adults and people with disabilities within the Oregon Department of Human Services. Any reductions should focus on administrative savings or other funding mechanisms, not cuts that harm access to care, quality, safety, or workforce stability. The reasons are clear.

1. Oregon's rapidly aging population will drive unprecedented demand for long-term care and services. Reductions to Medicaid reimbursement and aging supports would further weaken the state's ability to meet this growing need.
2. Long-term care caseloads and complexity are increasing across both Medicaid and private-pay populations. Access and affordability depend on adequate Medicaid reimbursement. Oregonians who pay for care out of pocket rely on affordable options in their communities, and without sufficient support, more individuals will be forced to spend down to qualify for Medicaid. This would expand caseloads and place additional pressure on state resources.
3. Finally, it is critical to leverage federal funds. Medicaid is a state-federal partnership, and every cut to matchable services results in a magnified loss when Oregon forfeits federal dollars. Protecting Medicaid long-term services and supports is a fiscally sound strategy.

We urge the Legislature to prioritize sustaining these core programs as budget decisions are finalized. Oregon's seniors and people with disabilities deserve nothing less.

Respectfully submitted,

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LeadingAge Oregon