



House Committee on Commerce & Consumer Protection

Testimony in Support of HB 4098

Andrea Meyer, Director of Government Relations

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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 is committed to protecting the financial security and well-being of older Oregonians. Insurance is a critical component of that security—whether it's homeowners, auto, or life insurance. In 2023, [AARP Oregon's Vital Voices Survey](#) found that nearly 75% of Oregonians 45 and older own their own home. And with that comes the responsibility and, in most cases, the legal requirement of home-owner insurance. Older Oregonians often spend decades responsibly paying premiums, trusting that when a crisis comes, be it a house fire or a car accident, their insurer will honor that commitment.

Yet, Oregon remains one of the few states where consumers cannot hold insurance companies accountable under the Unlawful Trade Practices Act (UTPA), our state's foundational consumer protection law.

HB 4098 closes this gap. It brings the insurance industry under the same legal standards that apply to virtually every other business in Oregon. This bill ensures that when an insurance company engages in deceptive, unfair, or bad faith practices, consumers—especially older adults who are often more vulnerable to such abuses—have meaningful avenues for redress.

Under current law, the Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS) can investigate complaints, but its remedies are limited. HB 4098 empowers consumers to seek recourse through consumer-led enforcement when insurance companies do not follow the law. It also allows the Attorney General or local district attorneys to bring enforcement actions—but only at the request of DCBS, ensuring regulatory oversight remains centralized and coordinated.

This legislation is not about punishing insurers—it's about accountability and fairness. Oregonians pay premiums with the expectation that their insurance providers will act in good

faith. When that trust is broken, they deserve the same protections afforded to consumers in every other industry.

In 2010, the legislature extended UTPA protections to banks, recognizing that public and private enforcement work hand-in-hand to deter misconduct and compensate victims. It is time we do the same for insurance.

On behalf of AARP Oregon and the older adults we serve, we urge you to support HB 4098 and help ensure that all Oregonians—regardless of age—are protected from unfair insurance practices.