

**BETTY KOMP**  
**STATE REPRESENTATIVE**  
DISTRICT 22



Testimony before House Human Services and Housing  
Wednesday, March 13, 2013

In Support of HB 2850

Chair Tomei and members of the committee, for the record I am Representative Betty Komp of House District 22. I come before you today in support of HB 2850 which increases the Earned Income Tax Credit.

I am here today not just as a legislator, but as an Oregonian whose life has been greatly impacted by economic hardship. As a child I grew up with thirteen brothers and sisters on a small dairy farm. Although my siblings hate when I use the word poverty, it is the most fiscally accurate way to describe our less than ideal situation growing up. This is the same circumstance far too many families in Oregon are experiencing every day.

As a young single mother with four daughters my life was full of blessings, but once again lacking luxury, we only lived with the basics of life. I was a full time student, worked part time and had a taxable income of \$7,000 my sophomore year of college in 1981. Every penny that came in the door was highly valued. I received Pell Grants and State aid to assist in paying for my education, but every single month I struggled to find ways to pay for groceries and the utility bill, let alone the prom dress my daughter was asking for. I worked extra shifts at work; I took on every opportunity to add dollars to our budget. When I filled out my taxes and realized I qualified for an earned income tax credit, it literally made it possible for me to continue my education.

Colleagues, I know that when we sit and debate about hundreds of millions of dollars everyday, a small amount like \$200 or \$400 seems insignificant. But for hard working families like mine, that are working for low wages and struggling to afford basic necessities a few hundred dollars can change lives.

HB 2066 is about fairness, it is about protecting our families and during these incredibly difficult economic times, it is *necessary*. I respectfully ask for your support.

Thank you for your time today.