

House Committee on Business & Labor
Testimony in Support of HB 4076: Workplace Age Discrimination Task Force

Chair Barker and members of the Committee.

My name is Trish Garner and I am the State Public Policy Chair of the American Association of University Women of Oregon. AAUW has been empowering women since 1881 by advancing equity through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.

Although it's difficult to believe, many believe that age discrimination isn't a problem. Analyzing the existence, scope and impact of age discrimination in the workplace therefore represents a critical first step. That information will then provide a firm foundation from which to define appropriate remedies.

It is an unfortunate fact today that discrimination based on age is so routinely practiced that it has become acceptable. It's as if once one reaches age 50, and certainly by ages 55 or 60, there's an expectation that older individuals should give way to younger employees. That even though older workers have demonstrated and continue to demonstrate value at their job by hard work, competence and experience, that it's time to move on and allow someone else to fill the slot.

These negative attitudes also assert themselves with particular strength in the case of older adults who seek employment.

AAUW of OR also supports HB 4076 on the grounds that, as presently constituted, the Task Force provides a balanced, reasonably sized group with which to consider these important issues.

Thank you.

Trish Garner, State Public Policy Chair, AAUW of OR, garner37@mac.com