



Senate Committee on Health Care

Testimony in support of SB 1507 -4 Amendment

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AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50+ to choose how they live as they age. AARP Oregon advocates on issues important to our more than 500,000 Oregon members with a focus on health security, financial resilience, and livable communities.

AARP Oregon supports SB 1507 with the -4 Amendment. Oregon Public Guardian (OPG) program serves an essential function and provides critical protection to some of the most vulnerable Oregonians, most especially older Oregonians.

Public Guardians take on significant responsibilities. They serve a vital role in making decisions that can connect individuals with services when they are not able to do it on their own and do not have anyone else in their lives. They can be the difference between an individual facing homelessness. A public guardian can make sure rent is paid in a timely manner avoiding eviction. And then can also work to make sure that the individual receives the needed proper care and treatment because absent that, it can lead to additional use of emergency services (including police and emergency medical services).

We must provide robust funding to protect older adults. When Public Guardian programs are funded properly, they can serve as models of the profession because of the public nature of their role and serve to improve the guardianship system as a whole.

The -4 amendment would increase funding to provide 5 additional staff positions that would increase OPG caseload capacity. With a growing waitlist, our OPG is in critical need of funding to keep up with the current demands.

We urge adoption of the -4 Amendment and passage of SB 1507.