

Feb. 18, 2025

Dear Chair Grayber, Vice Chairs Elmer & Munoz and Members of the Committee,

I am writing today in support of HB 3187. Let's give older workers a fair shot at employment.

Oregon is one of the oldest states in the nation and we are experiencing a permanent demographic shift. At the same time, there are critical worker shortages in many sectors. And yet, older workers still face age discrimination in employment. As intersecting issues such as individuals choosing to start families later in life and the opioid epidemic (resulting in more youth being raised by grandparents) are considered alongside age discrimination, it is clear that this is about more than an ability to save for retirement. This bill will have a rippling effect across generations and enhance every Oregonian's ability to provide for themselves and their families.

It's time to stop age discrimination and allow older adults the chance to compete for a job on an equal playing field without being screened out before an interview due to graduation or employment dates. This is a "win win" opportunity for workers, the state and ultimately, employers too, who will discover many outstanding employees who are older adults.

My own parents struggled with substance use and criminal records that ultimately led to my grandparents taking me in. My grandmother did not retire until she was 71 years old, only three years ago. This year I graduate with my Master's Degree in Social Work. I'm living proof that this issue impacts multiple generations and has the potential to lift entire families up. Please don't be the reason that intergenerational struggles impact Oregon's children; be a part of the solution that supports older individuals who want the same opportunities to contribute productively to their families and our communities.

As Oregonians enjoy a longer and healthier lives, they will also need the opportunity to be financially independent by not being shut out of opportunities for employment.

Let's make Oregon age friendly – and fair. Vote to support HB 3187

Sincerely,

Lacey Bolduc

Salem, Oregon