

Date: February 19, 2025

To: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards
From: Felicity Ratway, American Federation of Teachers - Oregon
RE: Support for HB 3187

Chair Grayber, Vice-Chairs Elmer and Nuñez, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony. I am writing on behalf of AFT-Oregon to express our support of HB 3187 in order to prevent discrimination based on age.

Our statewide federation represents over 18,000 education workers. Among our members are workers of all ages who bring important contributions to their workplaces. This includes older workers, who are a valuable resource in our workforce. Their perspectives are informed by years of experience and they can often lend valuable insights.

For many older workers today, working is a financial necessity. Nearly 20% of people over age 65 continue to work, which adds up to nearly 38 million older adults in the workforce today — more than two and a half times the number from 40 years ago.

But too often older workers encounter workplace age discrimination, whether it takes them longer to find that next job or they are fired because they are older. The reality is that people are living and working longer but workplace age discrimination threatens the financial security of older workers by pushing them out of the workforce and denying them jobs and promotions. Age discrimination in the workplace, like any other kind of discrimination, is wrong, but Oregon's law has not kept up.

We need to fix Oregon's workplace age discrimination law, so all workers are treated fairly based on their qualifications—not their age. We urge your support of HB 3187.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Felicity Ratway
Vice President at Large, AFT-Oregon
CGE Local 6069