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**Testimony in support of HB 5015**

Joint Committee on Ways & Means: Subcommittee on Transportation & Economic Development

February 25, 2025

AARP is pleased to support HB 5015. 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.

We support Bureau of Labor & Industries' (BOLI's) request for funding, specifically staffing for the Civil Rights division which enforces discrimination claims, including age discrimination. A priority for us this session is around financial resilience and addressing the significant barriers older Oregonians face in the workplace around age discrimination. That's why AARP along with almost two dozen allied organizations has introduced HB 3187 to fix the workplace age discrimination law.

We know that in Oregon we have a problem with workplace age discrimination. AARP research shows that 55% of Oregonians 40 and older who are working or looking for work, reported that they have seen or experienced age discrimination in the workplace. Older workers are part of solving the workforce shortage but face stereotyping and age-bias.

We need to ensure that BOLI has *sustainable* funding to address its civil rights backlog and have the necessary resources going forward to support the critical work of investigating and resolving discrimination complaints. BOLI plays a critical role when it comes to ensuring protections for all Oregonians against any form of discrimination. Timely investigations and resolutions to all discrimination claims is important to *both* employees and employers.

As we advocate for fixing our age discrimination law, we also urge this committee as it moves forward this session with budgets, to support fully funding BOLI to allow them to continue their critical role in protecting Oregonians from workplace discrimination laws.