

Submitter: Alicia Garrison
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3497

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 3497, which will establish a task force to develop a Multi-Sector Plan for Aging that serves all Oregonians. As a professional working with older adults and community member, I have seen firsthand the growing needs of Oregon's aging population and the gaps in services that make it difficult for individuals to age with dignity, choice, and support.

Oregon is on the cusp of a significant demographic shift. By 2030, nearly one in four Oregonians will be 65 or older. This shift is not temporary, but a permanent transformation that will impact every sector of our society—from housing and healthcare to transportation and social services. Our current systems are not adequately prepared to meet these challenges, and without a comprehensive, cross-sector plan, many Oregonians will struggle to access the services and support they need as they age.

HB 3497 is an essential first step in addressing this issue. By convening a task force that brings together stakeholders from multiple sectors—including healthcare, housing, transportation, workforce, and community services—we can create a framework that ensures all Oregonians, regardless of age or ability, have the resources and opportunities to thrive in their communities.

In my work, I have witnessed how collaboration across systems can improve outcomes for older adults. I believe that a Multi-Sector Plan for Aging will not only strengthen Oregon's systems of care but will also create more inclusive, resilient communities that support people of all ages.

We cannot wait any longer to act. The needs of our aging population are growing, and the time to prepare is now. I urge you to support HB 3497 and help Oregon take this critical step toward building a future where all generations can thrive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.