

Submitter: Lisa Watson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3497

Chair Hartman, Vice Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and members of the committee,

My name is Lisa Watson, and I am a 58-year-old female, born and raised in Oregon. As a lifelong resident, I have had the privilege of watching this state evolve, with its natural beauty, rich culture, and vibrant communities. But what has remained constant throughout the years is my deep belief in the importance of planning for and providing support to those in our communities who need it most—especially our aging population.

Today, I am writing to express my unwavering support for HB3497 and the Multi Sector Plan for Aging, aimed at creating the Shared Future Oregon Task Force and other initiatives. This effort is not just a policy proposal—it is a reflection of the values that we, as Oregonians, hold dear: respect for our elders, acknowledgment of their contributions, and commitment to ensuring that they can continue to live with dignity, respect, and security.

As an Indigenous woman, and a member of this emerging and aging sector, I am keenly aware of the interconnectedness of family and community. In our culture, the elders are the keepers of wisdom, knowledge, and history. They are the foundation upon which our society is built, and it is essential that we honor them by creating systems, support, and thriving communities as they age.

Oregon's aging population is growing at an unprecedented rate, and we must be proactive in addressing the needs of our older residents. Whether it is through accessible healthcare, affordable housing, or a robust support network that allows people to age in place, the policies we champion today will determine the future well-being of generations to come.

I fully support the goals of HB3497, which will help identify essential resources for aging Oregonians, ultimately ensuring that no one is left behind. This effort represents a significant step toward meeting the needs of our communities—especially those most vulnerable—and will allow our elders to live their lives with the dignity and care they deserve.

As a lifelong Oregonian, I understand the challenges we face in our state, and I believe that we have a responsibility to plan for the future in a way that is equitable, compassionate, and inclusive.

I urge you to support this important effort, which will help create a more resilient, supportive, and caring Oregon for all its residents, both now and in the years ahead.

Thank you for your time, attention, and commitment to this crucial issue. I respectfully ask for your full support of HB3497.

Sincerely,

Lisa Watson

Portland, Oregon