Testimony in Support of HB 3497
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Chair Hartman and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 3497. This bill is not just about planning for Oregon's aging population - it's about ensuring a future where all generations can thrive. The decisions we make today will define the kind of communities we live in tomorrow, and HB 3497 is a crucial step in preparing for that future.

Oregon is undergoing a major demographic shift. Sooner than we think, older adults will outnumber those under 18. This will affect every aspect of our society - our workforce, housing, healthcare, and economy. Yet, despite this reality, we lack a comprehensive plan to address the challenges and opportunities that come with this shift. HB 3497 fills that gap by establishing the Shared Future Oregon Task Force, which will work across-sectors to develop a Multi-Sector Plan for Aging (MPA) to coordinate efforts across state and local agencies, non-profits, and private sectors.

This isn't just about aging - it's about creating a state where strong intergenerational support systems exist, where caregivers aren't left without resources, where workforce shortages don't jeopardize our healthcare systems, and where every Oregonian, no matter their age, has access to economic opportunity and a stable future. The bill ensures that Oregon takes a proactive, rather than reactive, approach - one that integrates aging into state priorities and fosters collaboration among key stakeholders.

The future of Oregon depends on smart planning today. HB 3497 isn't just a response to demographic change - it's an investment in a state where all of us, now and in the years ahead, can live and contribute fully. I urge you to support this bill and ensure Oregon is prepared for the road ahead.

Thank you for your time and consideration.