

Submitter: Rebecca Farrell
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3755

****Testimony in Support of HB 3755 – Property Tax Exemption ****

My name is Rebecca Farrell and I'm an Oregon resident here to speak in favor of HB 3755, a bill that would exempt seniors aged 65 and older from property taxes if their household income is no more than \$150,000 and they've lived in their homes for at least 10 years. I believe this measure would bring real relief to a group that deserves it—our seniors—and I'd like to explain why.

Seniors today, especially those on fixed incomes, face a tough reality. Property taxes keep climbing—sometimes faster than Social Security checks or modest pensions can keep up. For someone who's worked hard, paid off their home, and rooted themselves in their community for a decade or more, it's unfair to watch that stability erode because of a tax bill they can't control. HB 3755 targets exactly these folks: not the wealthy, but everyday seniors with incomes up to \$150,000, which, let's be honest, isn't extravagant for a household in 2025, especially in places like Portland or Bend where housing costs have soared.

Take my neighbor, for example—retired, she has lived in her home for 20 years. She's 68, healthy, and wants to stay independent, but her property taxes eat up nearly a quarter of her income. She's not poor enough for deferral programs, but she's not rich either. Without relief, she might have to sell and leave the community she helped build. That's not just a personal loss; it's a hit to our neighborhoods, where seniors like her volunteer, mentor, and keep our history alive.

Exempting these seniors from property taxes isn't just kindness—it's smart policy. It keeps them in their homes, reducing strain on subsidized housing or care facilities, which cost taxpayers more in the long run. Studies show older adults who age in place have better health outcomes—fewer hospital visits, less need for Medicaid support. Plus, the 10-year residency rule ensures this benefit goes to Oregonians who've invested in our state, not newcomers or second-home owners gaming the system. And capping it at \$150,000 income keeps it fair, focusing relief where it's needed most.

I've heard the counterargument: "What about lost revenue for schools and services?" It's a fair question. But let's look at the numbers—only a fraction of seniors would qualify under these strict rules, and Oregon's budget has room to prioritize this without slashing essentials. We could offset it by closing loopholes for big

corporations or luxury vacation homes, which dodge far more than this exemption would ever cost. Besides, seniors aren't a burden—they're assets. Keeping them housed and secure frees up resources elsewhere.

HB 3755 is about dignity and stability. It says to our seniors: "You've earned this. Stay in the homes you love." It's a small price for us to pay to honor the folks who've paid their dues—literally and figuratively—for decades. I urge you to support this bill and give Oregon's seniors the peace of mind they deserve.

Thank you,
Rebecca Farrell
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