

APRIL 18, 2025,

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Leiber and Senator Sanchez:

On behalf of the Governor's Commission on Senior Services, we are writing to express our support for HB 3497, which creates the Shared Future Oregon Task Force to develop a comprehensive state plan on aging.

On April 7, 2025, the House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services unanimously voted to recommend that HB 3497, A-Engrossed, pass and referred to the Joint Ways and Means Committee. We urge you to refer the bill without delay to the Joint Ways and Means Committee's Health and Human Services Subcommittee for their consideration.

By 2030, the number of Oregonians aged 65 and older is projected to grow to over a million, comprising 21 percent of Oregon's population. The aging of the state's population will have significant long-term impacts on the state's overall economy, workforce, housing, homelessness, caregivers, health care, and infrastructure. This demographic shift is already reshaping local needs, particularly in rural communities. HB 3497 provides an essential and timely step forward and opportunity to develop a coordinated strategy across multiple private and public sectors to ensure that all Oregonians can age with dignity, access to services and community, and economic security.

Specifically, the Shared Future Oregon Task Force will:

- Bring together cross-sector voices, including those involved in health care, housing, transportation, workforce, and more.
- Promote inclusive and equitable policies that support aging across the lifespan.
- Lay the groundwork for a stronger, more integrated system of services and support for older adults.
- Assure that Oregon meets its mandate under the federal Older Americans Act and, indeed, becomes a leader in age-friendly communities and intergenerational planning.
- HB 3497 is not just about aging—it is about building a future where every generation can thrive. We urge you to take the necessary steps to ensure this bill becomes law.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to Oregon's future.

Sincerely,

Walt Dawson

Chair, Governor's Commission on Senior Services

GCSS Commissioners