



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF OREGON**

February 5, 2016

To: House Human Services and Housing Committee
Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer, Chair
Representative Carla Piluso, Vice-Chair
Representative Duane Stark, Vice-Chair

Email: hhs.exhibits@state.or.us

Re: HB 4042– Relating to General Assistance - Support

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, grassroots political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. LWVUS believes that the most effective social programs are those designed to prevent or reduce poverty.

The General Assistance Program is short term minimal financial assistance for very low income adults who are applicants for disability programs. The application process for disability benefits takes months and even years. During this time, General Assistance can provide limited funds until the benefits are granted. The back payments can reimburse the Department of Human Services for these temporary services.

Oregon has a substantial homeless population, including disabled adults, who might qualify for Medicaid and General Assistance. Many of these disabled adults have no resources, are homeless, and deteriorate without any assistance. Medical services are often required, which are ultimately costly to the public. The provision of Medicaid and minimal financial assistance can provide some stability for these disabled adults and assist them in getting treatment for their physical or mental disabilities.

The League believes this program is an efficient use of public funds to provide short term assistance to disability applicants. We recognize the current financial demands for state human and health services are enormous. However, this program might be a break even or cost savings in preventing further medical problems and expense to the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Handwritten signature of Norman Turrill in cursive.

Norman Turrill
LWVOR President

Handwritten signature of Karen Nibler in cursive.

Karen Nibler
Social Policy Coordinator