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Two Senate Democrats earn awards from AARP

Sen. Devlin and Sen. Steiner Hayward among legislators named Capitol Caregivers

SALEM – Two Oregon Senate Democrats are among a group of legislators being recognized by AARP Oregon for their support of Oregon’s family caregivers.

Sen. Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, D-Beaverton, and Sen. Richard Devlin, D-Tualatin, and others were recognized with the Capitol Caregiver award as leaders who advanced policies to support Oregon’s family caregivers who help their parents, spouses and other loved ones live independently at home in their communities, where they want to be.

“It is incumbent upon all of us to look out for the generations who come after us, but we must also not forget the contributions and needs of the generations that came before,” Steiner Hayward said. “The work of caregivers is vital to ensuring that people can continue to maintain their independence by living in their homes. It’s one of the toughest jobs there is, and it’s a true labor of love to care for others.”

The state budget that passed during the 2017 Legislative Session maintained funding for programs like Oregon Project Independence, which provides basic help to older families so they can stay in their own homes. The budget also protected funding for family caregiver training programs and the Aging and Disability Resource Connection of Oregon that helps people find appropriate care, supports and resources.

“Services that help people stay in their homes as they age have been a priority for me during my legislative career,” said Devlin, who has served as Co-Chair of the budget-writing Joint Ways and Means Committee since 2010. “We honor previous generations’ contributions to society by

ensuring that they are able to live out their lives with dignity. At the same time, these programs are more cost effective, as they reduce the need for more expensive residential care.”

The two join a bipartisan list of legislators that includes Sen. Jackie Winters, R-Salem; Sen. Tim Knopp, R-Bend; Rep. Nancy Nathanson, D-Eugene; Rep. Dan Rayfield, D-Corvallis; and Rep. Greg Smith, R-Heppner. The group will be presented with Capitol Caregiver awards on Jan. 11 at the State Capitol.

Across the state, approximately 470,000 Oregonians provide unpaid care for their older parents, spouses, children and adults with disabilities and other loved ones. That work is valued at about \$5.7 billion annually. These individuals help with bathing, dressing, meal preparation, managing finances, transportation, grocery shopping and many other tasks.

“Family caregivers provide invaluable care to their loved ones,” AARP Oregon State Director Jerry Cohen said, “and they need our support.”

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