



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Oregon Senate Acts to Ease Bottleneck in Caregiver Workforce

House Bill 4115 extends length of time background checks are valid

SALEM, OR – Background checks for workers serving older adults and people with disabilities are essential for quality and safety, but slow processing can have far-reaching consequences. Long waits can delay work for new employees, sometimes so long the worker leaves for another field, reducing access to care and interrupting reimbursement for the provider organizations doing the hiring.

House Bill 4115, passed in the Oregon Senate today, allows completed background checks to stay valid for a longer period and permits workers to rely on an existing background check when starting a new job in the same field, instead of starting the process all over again when changing jobs.

“House Bill 4115 is a commonsense measure to eliminate wasteful and duplicative processes that do nothing to improve safety or quality of care,” said **Senator Sara Gelser Blouin (D-Corvallis, Albany and S. Salem)**. “This bill makes our system more efficient, ensures aging Oregonians and those with disabilities can access support from safe caregivers in a timely way and will reduce frustration for quality caregivers that already passed a background check.”

“This bill is about cutting red tape and making life easier for caregivers and residential care and behavioral health workers and reduces wait time for people needing help,” said **Representative Nancy Nathanson (D – Eugene)**.

The measure extends the re-check cycle from two years to three years for homecare workers, personal support workers, caregivers in community-based care facilities, and more. The federal government requires re-checks every five years or sooner. The bill also expands “portability” of checks, the ability for a worker to use one approved background check during its valid period to get hired in a new position doing similar work. In addition, it improves credentialing processes for behavioral health providers and employers to enable them to get to work and get paid for their services faster.

The legislation cleared the Oregon Senate today in a vote of 22 to 8. Four Republicans joined Senate Democrats in support. The measure now goes to Governor Tina Kotek for her signature.

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