



## SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

Oregon State Legislature  
State Capitol  
Salem, OR

### NEWS RELEASE

May 18, 2015

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#### **Energy assistance for struggling Oregonians receives Senate support**

#### *HB 3257 extends Oregon Low-Income Homes Energy Assistance Program*

SALEM – The Senate approved legislation this morning extending the sunset on a program that provides electric bill assistance to low-income families. The Oregon Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program is funded through the state and federal government, and is designed to help low-income households with home heating costs. House Bill 3257 extends the program's current sunset by two years, to January 2, 2018.

"This year we had a mild winter, but that isn't always the case," said Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson (D-Gresham), who carried the bill on the floor. "Many energy assistance recipients have medical bills and trouble keeping food on the table, leaving them more vulnerable to temperature extremes that cause increased energy bills. This program helps struggling Oregonians make ends meet during the coldest months of the year."

A majority of Oregonians that take advantage of the Oregon Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program are seniors, people with disabilities, veterans, families with children under five, and others who simply cannot afford to pay their utility bill. To be eligible to receive assistance, a recipient's income must be at or below 60 percent of Oregon's median income, based on household income and household size. Recipients must also have documented energy costs. The program is administered by Oregon Housing and Community Services through local Community Action Agencies and other community service providers.

"Struggling families shouldn't have to choose between heat and other basic needs," said Senator Arnie Roblan (D-Coos Bay). "Safety net programs like the Oregon Low-Income Home

Energy Assistance program are critical to making sure Oregon families can get through tough times.”

HB 3257 will now go to the Governor for her consideration.

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