



## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 617

Submitted by Denise Dion, Member  
Governor's Commission on Senior Services  
March 5, 2007

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*Senator Bill Morrisette,  
Springfield*

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Chair Morrisette and Members of the Committee:

My name is Denise Dion. I am a resident of Wasco County, and am chair of the Mental Health committee of the Governor's Commission on Senior Services. I am sorry that I am unable to testify in person, and thank you for the courtesy of accepting this written statement for the record. I am submitting this brief statement on behalf of the Commission.

The Governor's Commission on Seniors Services is committed to helping Oregon leaders plan now and invest now for our future. The Governor's Commission held a statewide series of community forums last year to meet with Oregonians about the future challenges we face as our population ages. We heard from a number of people about a range of issues, including mental health issues and disability issues at these forums.

As you may know, the senior population is the fastest growing segment of the population in this state. By the year 2025, nearly one in five Oregonians will be over the age of 65. This phenomenon will mean great changes for Oregon and our communities.

This bill, by establishing a traumatic brain injury registry system, and directing DHS to expand housing opportunities and other services for people with traumatic brain injury, can be a useful mechanism to help us plan for a future where citizens are healthy, vital and independent.

The Commission is delighted that you have chosen to consider this bill so early in the session. Last session, the Commission also gave its strong support to establishment of a Traumatic Brain Injury registry, but the bill never received a hearing.

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The Governor's Commission on Senior Services is pleased to support this piece of legislation, and we extend our appreciation to those advocates and legislators whose leadership brought this bill forward.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill.