



February 17, 2022

House Committee on Rules

Re: Testimony in Support of HB 4157- providing one time \$600 payments to eligible low-wage workers who filed taxes in 2020

Dear Chair Smith Warner, Vice-Chair Breese Iverson and Fahey, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 4157 on behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon (ACLU of Oregon), a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing civil liberties and civil rights, with more than 28,000 members statewide.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to exacerbate the flaws in our systems particularly for Oregonians who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or people of color, women, LGBTQ+ and low wage earners. These Oregonians have been and continue to be disproportionately impacted by the economic fallout from this pandemic, and will feel the health and economic impacts of this crisis much longer. As we emerge from the pandemic, we have seen wages grow, but inflation and the cost of living has outstripped those gains, making it even more difficult for low wage earners to afford basic necessities.

HB 4157 makes a critical, timely investment in Oregonians struggling to get by on low wages via a very efficient approach. By providing a one-time \$600 cost of living support payment to individuals who claimed the Earned Income Tax Credit for 2020, you ensure that families most in need get support through a state means test that doesn't require further application and is not subject to state or federal income tax. We ask that you recognize Oregonians who are low wage earners and have held us through this pandemic by supporting a parallel budget-ask to ensure that families who would otherwise qualify, but have an ITIN filer in the household, are not excluded from this \$600 payment.

HB 4157 is one of the most meaningful investments Oregon can make in ensuring an equitable and rapid recovery for more than a quarter million of Oregonians.

ACLU of Oregon respectfully urges you to pass HB 4157 with a “do pass” recommendation.

Respectfully,
Jessica Maravilla
Policy Director of ACLU of Oregon