

Senate Bill 774

Discontinues return of surplus revenue refunds to taxpayers.

I oppose this bill in its entirety. Taking away the “kicker” tax refunds from the people of the State of Oregon is wrong. Families have to live within their means consistently. It isn’t easy at times but that is the way life works. The state needs to do the same. It means we have to make hard choices on what we spend money on, if we get to take a vacation or if the kids get to play the sports they want to. The idea behind the kicker refunds holds the state accountable to budgeting similarly. We can’t fund everything that everyone wants to do.

Education needs to be funded, but it needs to be the priority in budgeting going forward. In looking at the state budget total funds, both the OHA and the Department of Human services have a combined budget of over 45.6 Billion. Economic Development is another 11 billion. Administration is 18.4 Billion. It seems that some choices could be made and cut funds from some of those areas and move those funds to the State School Fund.

Another issue is that I believe this bill will end up having the effect of lowering tax receipts overall. We are in a situation where more people are moving out of the state than are moving in. Combine that with companies relocating as well and it becomes a bigger problem. My family has been part of this state since before it was a state. My dad’s family came here in 1853, my mom’s family came here in 1889. We have a lot of history in Oregon. However, some of my cousins and other relatives have started moving out of Oregon in the last decade. This bill will cause a larger portion of people to leave as well. Part of the problem with that is the people that do leave are usually the ones able to afford to leave. That has an outsized impact on tax revenues. This has already been seen in other states like California and New York. Do not add Oregon to that list.

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