

Submitter: K M

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure: SB774

Honorable Legislature:

I am writing to express my opinion on SB 774, the bill that discontinues the return of revenue refunds to Oregon taxpayers, known as the "kicker". I am a 25-year resident of Oregon, and a Precinct Committee Chairperson who actively engages in our political process, because I feel that I can make a difference for the better.

As you know, the Oregon Legislature enacted the kicker in 1979, and it was enshrined into the Oregon constitution in 2000. It is triggered if actual state government revenues of the Oregon people's money, paid in good faith, for the biennium are more than 2% higher than forecast at the time the budget was adopted. Our process only amends the state constitution if the proposed revision is agreed to by at least two-thirds of all the members of each house. That is a large hurdle to pass, and it was passed.

We the People expect you, the government, also made up of We the People, to exist to support the wellbeing of the people of Oregon. Oregon has suffered badly in the last three years, from civil unrest, job losses, pandemic shutdowns, school kids falling behind in their education, small business losses, inflation, rising crime, rising housing costs, rising utility bills, homelessness issues, and some of the highest gas prices in our nation.

To remove the kicker amendment from our Constitution is the moral equivalent of kicking us while we are down, among the myriad of physical and psychological difficulties we are enduring. I'm sure you are aware of the long wait list to get in to see a mental health specialist in this state, especially for our children, a sad tribute to the "state of our state".

Please refrain from removing more of our dignity by taking more of our money when we need it most. People are leaving our beautiful state. We don't need another reason for them to go. Thank you for your time in reading this letter.