



Senate Finance & Revenue Committee

February 8, 2024

Testimony in Opposition to SB 1549

Chair Meek, Vice-Chair Boquist, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Daniel Hauser, Deputy Director for the Oregon Center for Public Policy, and I respectfully submit this testimony in opposition of SB 1549 on behalf of the Center.

The Oregon Center for Public Policy is a nonpartisan think tank dedicated to improving the economic outcomes for all Oregonians, particularly low-income families and Oregonians of color, through research and analysis.

We can all agree that supporting veterans struggling to stay stably housed, receive substance abuse or mental health treatment, or otherwise keep their head above water should be a priority for Oregon. However, SB 1549 is an exceptionally inefficient and ineffective way of achieving this aim.

Based on a prior session revenue impact statement, SB 1549 is expected to spend \$9 to \$10 million per year in tax breaks, an estimated two-thirds of which go to people making more than \$80,000 per year. It would be far more effective to take those millions of dollars and directly invest in rent assistance, mental health and substance abuse treatment, or other economic support for veterans living under or near poverty.

If legislators choose to prioritize this tax subtraction, it needs to have a six-year sunset – just like nearly all new tax breaks created in Oregon. It would also be greatly improved by prioritizing the limited resources towards low-income veterans by capping it at \$75,000.

We urge you to oppose SB 1549.

