

Title: The Unintended Consequences of HJR201: A Dangerous Path for Oregon's Future

As Oregonians, we all desire a safe and prosperous state for ourselves and future generations. However, the recently proposed HJR201, also known as the Act to fund public safety through a state property tax, is a misguided approach that could have severe unintended consequences for our communities. Below I highlight the potential risks and pitfalls of this legislation and urge you, our legislators, to consider the long-term implications for our state and vote against it.

Property Tax Burden on Oregonians

HJR201 proposes a state property tax to fund public safety. This would be an additional tax on top of the already existing local property taxes. Many Oregonians, especially those on fixed incomes or struggling to make ends meet, would be disproportionately affected by this new tax. The increased financial burden could lead to increased displacement and further exacerbate the housing crisis in our state.

Potential for Misallocation of Funds

The Act would create administrative authority to manage the funds generated by the state property tax. While the intent is to support public safety, there is no guarantee that the funds will be allocated effectively or efficiently. The potential for mismanagement, waste, and corruption is a significant concern. Oregonians deserve a transparent and accountable system for funding public safety, and HJR201 does not provide that assurance.

Undermining Local Control

By establishing a state-level property tax for public safety, HJR201 could undermine local control over public safety funding. Local governments and communities know their specific needs and challenges best, and they should have the autonomy to allocate resources accordingly. A one-size-fits-all approach imposed by the state may not be suitable for all Oregon communities and could lead to less effective public safety measures.

Long-term Implications for Oregon's Economy

The increased tax burden on Oregonians could have a chilling effect on our state's economy. High property taxes could discourage new businesses and residents from moving to our state and discourage investment in our communities. This could lead to a decline in economic growth and job opportunities, ultimately affecting the state's ability to fund public safety and other essential services in the long run.

In conclusion, while the intentions behind HJR201 may be well-meaning, the potential risks and unintended consequences of this legislation are too significant to ignore. Oregonians deserve a more thoughtful and responsible approach to funding public safety that does not put an undue burden on taxpayers, undermine local control, or jeopardize our state's economic future. I urge you to consider these concerns and ask that you oppose HJR201.