

Submitter: Sara Edwards
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HJR201

Oregon has one of the highest personal income tax rates in the country: The states with the highest income tax for 2023 include California 13.3%, Hawaii 11%, New York 10.9%, New Jersey 10.75%, District of Columbia 10.75%, Oregon 9.9%, and Minnesota 9.85% (<https://taxfoundation.org/data/all/state/state-income-tax-rates-2023/>). Further, Oregon has the highest property tax in the Pacific Northwest at 0.78% when Washington is only 0.70% and California a mere 0.66% (<https://www.bankrate.com/real-estate/property-tax-by-state/#by-state>). Though property tax revenue overall for Oregon has fallen in recent years due to decreased sales from high interest rates and very slight property devaluation, for people who did not move and kept their homes, our rates have only increased yearly and we have no say over these increases. To now be hit with an increase that is beyond our power to oppose is unethical. In this economic climate of high property prices, low wages and inflation where Oregon experienced a higher rates of inflation than most other areas on the country at 3.3%–3.8% (<https://usafacts.org/articles/which-us-regions-have-the-highest-inflation-rates/>), adding this additional burden of higher property taxes to home owners on limited or single household incomes is wrong. Why are home owners made to shoulder the burden of Portland Oregon's poor decisions when others are not? It has already been shown that the vote for drug legalization in Measure 110 which has caused the homeless population to explode in recent months was a total failure and has cost the state millions. There was no way for the rest of the state to oppose these measures when they are put on a ballot since the Portland metro area has more votes than any other county combined. Ultimately, those of us outside of Portland metro were and are not able to vote to any effect in Oregon since this area silences the majority of the state. Now after being disenfranchised by Portland, the same is being done to us by the Oregon Legislature who is trying to make decisions that will hurt us like the drug legalization measure did. Counties themselves, should be able to vote on raises to property taxes, not the Legislature and not Portland. Maybe the answer is to have more transparency in our state spending and be more budget conscious. How is \$112.8 billion total funds not enough for the state of Oregon to operate without the Legislature asking for more money from Oregon citizens? Already our quality of living and overall wealth has decreased since the pandemic and election of Joe Biden in 2020. Why would the Oregon Legislature want to add to our burden?

Thank you for taking the time to listen.