



COMMISSIONER HEATHER BUCH, District 5, East Lane

PUBLIC SERVICE BUILDING / 125 EAST 8TH AVENUE / EUGENE, OR 97401

March 11, 2025

House Committee on Revenue
HB 3518—Relating to Funding County Assessment Functions

Dear Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Reschke and Walters, and Members of the Committee:

I and the Lane County Board of Commissioners supports HB 3518, which would stabilize, diversify, and index funding for county Assessment and Taxation (A&T) functions. By increasing and indexing the County Assessment Function Funding Assistance Account (CAFFA) and dedicating a portion of property tax revenues, this bill ensures counties have the resources needed to fairly and efficiently administer Oregon's property tax system.

Since the 2008 recession and the loss of state funding for CAFFA, counties have struggled to fully fund A&T offices, leading to:

- Missed tax revenue due to unreported property improvements and underreported business property returns.
- Reduced public service for programs like the Veterans Exemption Program.
- Staffing shortages—Lane County operates with 48 FTE, far below the 76 recommended by the Oregon Department of Revenue.

In FY 2024-25, Lane County certified \$720.9 million in taxes for 85 taxing districts and added \$2.37 billion in new taxable value, generating \$4.72 million in additional tax revenue. Without adequate funding, these revenues are at risk.

HB 3518 would restore CAFFA's original intent—helping counties cover 25% of A&T costs instead of the current 12%. This investment would improve fairness, increase local tax revenues, and ensure stable funding for essential public services.

I urge your support for HB 3518. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Heather Buch
East Lane County Commissioner