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On Behalf Of:
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I feel like the real problem is not our budget, but our revenue.

We are still struggling with the effects of “Measure 5” from the early 90’s and measure 50 from the late 90’s. The problem is, it was applied to both personal property taxes AND business property taxes, with the bulk of the reductions going to businesses, not people.

We also complain that we have many policies that make our taxation regressive (vehicle fees, gas tax, etc) that take a higher portion of low income family’s budgets. I don’t understand why we are not raising tax rates on incomes and businesses in a progressive way to stabilize our state budget. Constraints have been plaguing our state for decades, and our leaders have never really dealt with the core problem of drastically reduced revenue.

Everything people spoke about Saturday morning screamed of a society in crisis. Our federal government situation is only going to make that worse. We can’t just throw up our hands and say “we are not cutting anything.” Costs are rising, and that means programs with “stable funding” will have to make cuts. Cuts in education and food assistance will cause higher costs in public safety, prisons, and lower revenues from workers being paid less (just to name a few) that will outweigh any savings from limited spending.

Our country is crying for income inequality to be dealt with. Taxing everyone more or cutting programs to the most vulnerable parts of our state is not going to address this immediate and dire need. You can start to address this at our state level and show the nation what a real system that supports the needs of the people looks like. Stop letting the “winners” take it all and run with it. We need those who have “won”, who are better off than most of the state, to give back and support those who can’t even survive.

Businesses need to do more than “pay their workers” and expect that the income tax on that pay will take care of everything they need. Our roads, bridges, schools, utilities, recreation programs, parks and green spaces, etc. all contribute to the ability of a business to function properly and attract good potential employees. Unemployment, food assistance, rental assistance, and more all benefit large companies that don’t pay their workers well and drain away profits to give to investors, and executive level people. Oregon has a history of allowing larger companies special tax breaks that negate the value of having them in our state.

It is time to change the way we do business here in our state. We can't keep "doing more with less". It is not possible. We must look at this inflection point and step up to meet the challenge in ways our previous leaders have not. Tax the rich. Tax the businesses more than the bottom rate out of most of the states in the whole country.

We need positive change, and we need it now!