

Submitter: D Torres
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1177
Chair & Committee Members,

I STRONGLY OPPOSE the proposal to use Oregon's Kicker refund to fund wildfire relief and prevention efforts. The Kicker is a unique and essential part of Oregon's tax structure, designed to return surplus revenue to taxpayers. This refund is a direct investment in Oregonians, and it is vital that it remains protected for its intended purpose: providing financial relief to individuals and families who contribute to the state's economic growth.

While the threat of wildfires is a serious and ongoing concern, it is critical that the state properly allocate funding for wildfire management through the established budget and dedicated revenue streams. Diverting the Kicker refund undermines its original intent and risks creating long-term fiscal instability. The Kicker refund provides much-needed relief to working Oregonians, especially in challenging economic times, and it should not be used to address a critical issue that should be addressed through appropriate, sustainable funding mechanisms.

Instead of tapping into the Kicker refund, we advocate for prioritizing long-term solutions through the state's budget process, ensuring that wildfire funding does not come at the expense of Oregon's working families. Let's work together to find a more stable and reliable way to address wildfire risks without compromising the Kicker and the financial stability it provides for taxpayers.

If every person in this state who resides or works here contributed \$10 per year to a wildfire fund, with an approximate population of 4.27 million people would equal over \$40 million. Everyone that lives or works in this state is affected by wildfires and breathes the same air when one starts and there is absolutely no reason why \$10 couldn't be contributed to this fund to help fight fires rather than taking Oregonian Kicker funding.

I strongly suggest that Legislators begin working on solving the REAL issue which are the heavily forested lands in this state that remain heavily laden with fuel to burn, including the lands that have already burnt with trees remaining, waiting to burn again. These lands need to have reservoirs on them that hold water for fighting fires and fire breaks between them and communities/homeowners. The burden of maintaining those lands needs to be addressed, not the people who live next to them who burn regardless of what they do to their properties.

LA is a fine example of that. It's time Legislators begin listening to the people and

stop with the mandates and regulations and the stealing of tax dollars to fight fires without addressing the real issue. Legislators also need to begin attracting industry that will help foster the maintenance of these lands better such as timber harvesting, grazing, etc...

DO NOT pass this bill.