

**Monday 2/2/26** - House Committee on Revenue Hearing Room A  
HB 4125 - Revenue Forecast Modernization Act

Good afternoon Chair Nathanson, vice-chairs Reschke and Walters, and members of the committee, thank you for having us here. My name is Maya Pueo von Geldern.

I'm here today from Portland, as a PTA leader, community organizer and public school advocate, a board member of Community & Parents for Public Schools, but most importantly, as a parent of two students in Portland Public Schools, and I'd like to speak in support of House Bill 4125. Because while you all may have discussed this in years past, as someone just referencing Groundhog's Day in their testimony, we still haven't solved the fact that the kicker is a major issue, so maybe this IS the year Bill Murray doesn't wake up to the same day over again.

First, let's be clear - it's a credit, not a refund. And most Oregonians wouldn't see those dollars affect their every day.

To our Democratic Leaders, you can't tell constituents that you don't have enough revenue and at the same time, not go to bat for this reform. To our Republican Leaders, you say you don't want anymore taxes. Well, our Kicker credit is making our revenue shortfalls even worse. A similar situation in 2017 led to the passage of the Student Success Act tax and you came very close to a gross receipts tax.

Oregonians require government services and when funding for those services go towards Kicker credits, you're upping the ante and corporations, small businesses and individuals are going to have to pay more taxes through other tax reform. A replacement for the QEM is being proposed this session. Should it pass, a new and independent research company might be about to tell you just how underfunded schools are in this state. When an independent research firm was asked that question last year, it concluded that Oregon should increase per student funding by 33%. Keeping the Kicker in its current form is going to cost all Oregonians more in the end. Or are we just going to keep paying for someone to tell us what we need for successful schools, only to ignore it?

I have spent the last 9 years volunteering and subbing in my sons' school, and collaborating with schools from across our district, so I've had a good long time to see how our kids are affected by the decisions you make. And it's heartbreaking. Our schools are underfunded and the call to community for support is what happens year after year with every cut, but it shouldn't take parent volunteers to fill the gaps that exist due to underfunding, especially when we're handing money back to those who *don't* need it the most. (And I want to add that our schools provide services that reach far beyond simply education. The importance of fully funded schools is tremendous.) It's been painful to watch parents bend over backward to fill the gaps in education, whether through fundraising or volunteering, and then see the state send checks back to Oregon's wealthiest recipients.

These decisions affect all of our kids, no matter the county, no matter the party. And these kids are the future of this state. HB 4215 won't fix our education system, but especially in times of the cuts and chaos already mentioned at the federal level, we need to grow the pie, and HB 4125 will help us start to do so with dollars we are already collecting. Please support this bill.

Thank you for your time,

Maya Pueo von Geldern