

Submitter: Susan Wimberley

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SJR201

I am opposed to this bill. The citizens amended the constitution to prevent you from spending more than was budgeted. Now you are simply trying to work around the publics stated desires by STEALING that money so you can waste it. There are so many ways you could cut waste instead of increasing taxes, which is what this bill is really all this bill is - a tax increase.

It seems to me that every legislative session, since our Kicker Law was written into Oregon's Constitution, there has been an attempt to end it or reduce the amount returned to tax payers. Every session!

That surplus money is owed to us tax payers. But apparently there's always a group of legislators – such as the sponsors of this year's SJR 201 – that just can't stand it if tax payers get some of their own money back.

Many voters in Oregon, especially taking into account the recent action taken by the Joint Special Committee on Referendum Petition 20216-302, the (gas tax) referendum, already feel like their voices are not being heard. Or are simply being ignored. Consider, how does SJR 201 lower costs or encourage growth for us?

If sponsors of SJR 201 are serious about prioritizing affordability, growing the economy, working towards prosperity and restoring trust in voters, they should stop looking for new ways to take from Oregonians what is already theirs. This might involve refocusing priorities, reducing wasteful spending, and cutting taxes and regulations that harm businesses and families.

It should be obvious that throwing more money at schools is not working. According to the Oregon Department of Education's data, student enrollment continues to decline while the number of full-time employees continues to rise.

How are Oregonians supposed to prosper when at nearly every turn, in every legislative session, more taxes are levied, higher and additional fees imposed and as in this case – the money already designated to be rightfully returned to tax payers – is taken away from us? It doesn't matter what the sponsors of SJR 201 want the money for, that money is ours, to spend as we want, not as some group in Salem thinks they know what's better for us than we do ourselves.

I cannot urge strongly enough to the Committee to table this piece of legislation. Please do the right thing and protect our Kicker refund.