

Chair Broadman, Vice-Chair McLane, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of AFT-Oregon. We are a labor federation representing workplace unions across the state in early learning, K-12 schools, and across our state's college and university landscape. Our 28 unions represent over 18,000 essential staff, instructors, faculty, and employees who support our students and advocate for the public good. **AFT-Oregon urges your support for SJR 201 and meaningful kicker reform. We encourage you to pass this bill.**

Oregon's public services, from education to healthcare and beyond, depend on reliable and reasonably predictable revenue. The kicker, however intended, throws a wrench in our state's ability to fund essential needs and spend the accurately collected revenue. Our union members are academic faculty, graduate employees, and educators well trained in the scientific method and the widely accepted 5% margin of error. The current 2% margin of error within the constitution which the state economist is bound to be accurate within, months and years into the future, is destabilizes our state budget. Whether intended or not, the kicker is seemingly designed to kick often. Which it does. Collected revenue is returned and our funds are depleted to inadequate levels. Education is then inadequately funded as a result.

Amidst chaos at the Federal level and budget uncertainty in the state, **it is more important than ever that our state can keep the revenue it collects to spend equitably, fairly, and justly.** The kicker largely benefits the wealthiest Oregonians and drives income inequality in the wrong direction.

SJR 201 will put to voters a reasonable reform – half of the kicker still returning to taxpayers, with the other half helping to fund some of our greatest shortfalls in education and wildfire prevention. H.R. 1 will continue to impact our state budget. Now more than ever we need every tool in the toolkit to be used for meaningful revenue fixes.

If put to the ballot, AFT-Oregon members would move in full force to educate our communities across the state of its importance and benefit. For the good of our students, our communities, and our state, we urge your support of SJR 201.

Sincerely,



Harper Haverkamp, PhD
American Federation of Teachers – Oregon (AFT-Oregon)