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On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SJR201

I write in strong opposition to SJR 201 because it fundamentally alters the promise made to Oregon taxpayers and erodes trust between the people and their government.

The proposed constitutional amendment would redirect surplus revenue that would otherwise be returned to taxpayers under the existing “kicker” framework, replacing a clear and predictable refund mechanism with a discretionary allocation controlled by the Legislature.

Oregonians are already facing rising utility bills, escalating insurance costs, increasing local levies, and persistent affordability challenges, and for many families the kicker is not a bonus but a necessary financial reset that helps them cover basic expenses, pay down debt, or build modest savings.

The kicker exists because the state collected more than it projected, and returning that money is not a gift from government but a recognition that it was never the state’s to permanently retain.

Embedding this redirection into the Oregon Constitution removes flexibility from voters and consolidates greater financial authority in a Legislature that many residents believe has not demonstrated consistent fiscal restraint or prioritization discipline.

If education funding, community colleges, and wildfire prevention are true priorities, they should be addressed through transparent budgeting reforms, cost controls, and performance accountability within the existing revenue structure rather than by redefining surplus refunds as a funding mechanism.

Redirecting surplus revenue may appear fiscally responsible on the surface, but it effectively shifts the burden of structural budgeting issues onto taxpayers who are already stretched excessively thin. Oregon taxes are crippling to many Oregonians and you're only harming citizens and taxpayers even more.

Wildfire prevention and suppression demand long-term strategy and forest management reform, not reliance on unpredictable surplus revenue streams that fluctuate with economic cycles.

Education funding deserves stability and measurable outcomes, not dependency on

a constitutional amendment that reduces taxpayer protections and weakens direct fiscal accountability. This illustrates the Oregon Legislature's inability to properly manage funds. Oregon taxpayers should not be punished for it.

SJR 201 sets a concerning precedent by redefining surplus revenue as an opportunity for expansion rather than a signal that revenue forecasts and spending assumptions require greater precision.

The people of Oregon deserve a government that lives within its means, prioritizes efficiency, and honors commitments already embedded in law. This is an undignified overreach, once again. Which is an unfortunate pattern clearly shown by Oregon Legislators.

For these reasons, I urge you to reject SJR 201 and pursue reforms that strengthen fiscal responsibility without diminishing the financial autonomy of the citizens you represent.