

Submitter: James Strange

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SJR201

Dear Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue,

My name is James Strange, and I am a longtime taxpayer in Oregon. I am writing to strongly oppose Senate Joint Resolution 201 (SJR 201), which proposes amending our state constitution to redirect a portion of the kicker refunds that rightfully belong to Oregon taxpayers.

The kicker law, enshrined in our constitution since 1980, exists for a vital reason: to return over collected taxes to the people who paid them. It's not "surplus revenue" for the government to spend—it's money that hardworking Oregonians overpaid due to inaccurate revenue forecasts. SJR 201 would undermine this by siphoning off half of any kicker amount exceeding \$300 million, redirecting it to education and wildfire prevention. While these are important priorities, they should not come at the expense of taxpayers' refunds. If the state needs more funding for schools or fire suppression, lawmakers should propose transparent budget adjustments or dedicated taxes, not raid the kicker.

Many Oregon families, including mine, count on these refunds to cover everyday expenses like groceries, utilities, or unexpected bills. The average kicker check is expected to be \$300 to \$600 for most taxpayers this cycle—money that makes a real difference for working-class folks, not just the wealthy. Redirecting even a portion of larger kickers feels like a backdoor tax increase, especially when state spending has ballooned without corresponding improvements in services. The kicker was designed to rein in government growth and hold officials accountable for accurate budgeting—let's keep it that way.

I urge you to vote NO on SJR 201 and protect the integrity of the kicker for all Oregonians. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
James Strange