

Submitter: Matthew Magee

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SJR201

Written Testimony in Strong Opposition to SJR 201

Submitted: February 19, 2026

To: Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue Oregon State Legislature

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Matthew, and I am a proud resident of Wilsonville, Oregon. However, with what's been coming out of Salem the last several months is not only disturbing, it is destroying our state, our communities and well being of all Oregonians. I am writing to submit this testimony in strong opposition to SJR 201, which proposes a constitutional amendment that would redirect the people's personal income tax "Kicker" refund—when the surplus exceeds \$300 million—to K-12 education, community colleges, and wildfire prevention and suppression.

The Kicker is NOT government surplus money—it is OUR money. It is a constitutional safeguard that returns excess tax revenue to the hardworking Oregonians who overpaid it in the first place. SJR 201 is nothing more than another attempt by the legislature to raid the people's refund instead of living within its means.

Let's look at the facts on education funding, which this bill claims to help:

The 2023-2025 biennium already delivered a record \$10.2 billion in school funding. The 2025-2027 biennium is allocating \$11.36 billion—another massive increase.

Despite these record-breaking appropriations, Oregon public school enrollment has steadily declined for the last five years. Since 2020, roughly more than 37,000 students have left the public system. Families are voting with their feet—choosing homeschooling, private schools, charter schools, or even leaving the state—because more money has not translated into better outcomes for our children.

We do not need to siphon off the Kicker to "fix" education. What we need is fiscal discipline from the legislature. Stop the endless spending sprees, eliminate waste, and focus on real reforms that actually improve student achievement and safety. The same principle applies to wildfire prevention: important work, but it should not come at the expense of returning over-collected taxes to the taxpayers who earned them.

Oregonians are tired of being told that every problem can be solved by taking more of OUR hard-earned money. The Kicker forces government to budget responsibly. SJR 201 weakens that protection and sends the wrong message: “Don’t worry about overspending—we’ll just keep what we don’t need.”

I respectfully urge you to reject SJR 201 and keep the full Kicker refund where it belongs—with the people of Oregon. If this measure advances to the ballot, I and many of my neighbors will vote “NO” and encourage every Oregonian to do the same.

Cordially,

Matthew
Wilsonville, Oregon