

Submitter: Tyler Burnham

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SJR201

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Tyler Burnham. I live in Halsey, Oregon (97348), and I am a farm worker and the sole provider for my wife and children.

I was raised on and ran my family's fifth-generation farm for most of my life. I know what it means to work long days, depend on the weather, live with tight margins, and plan every dollar carefully just to keep a household going. In agriculture, if the numbers don't work, you don't get to change the rules, you cut costs and live within your means. The State of Oregon should be doing the same.

SJR 201 does the opposite.

The kicker is not a bonus to my family. It is part of our yearly survival. It helps cover rising fuel costs so I can get to work, power bills that keep going up, vehicle repairs, tools, and the direct costs of raising and homeschooling our kids, because we take full responsibility for their education instead of relying on a public system that does not work for our family.

We are being told that the state needs to keep more of the money we earned to fund programs we do not use and that continue to produce poor results.

We do not use the public school system. We pay for our children's education ourselves. Yet we are expected to give up a critical refund to prop up a system that is failing many Oregon students.

We are also told this is for wildfire funding. Rural families like mine live with the real consequences of mismanaged land and failed policy decisions. More money without accountability is not a solution. Before taking more from working families, the state should prove it can manage what it already has.

The kicker exists because voters demanded a safeguard, a guarantee that the government would not simply keep more when it over-collects. SJR 201 weakens that safeguard and shifts the burden onto the very people who are already carrying this state: working families, rural communities, and single-income households.

In farming, you cannot spend money you do not have. You cannot demand more from others to cover your mistakes. You adjust, prioritize, and make it work.

That is all we are asking the state to do.

Do not take the kicker from my family to fund systems we do not use and that are not being held accountable.

Vote NO on SJR 201.

Respectfully,
Tyler Burnham
Halsey, Oregon
97348