

Written Testimony in **Opposition** to **HJR 14** Submitted By Fred Yates

I am in total and complete Opposition to HJR 14 and ask that you stop this bill now. Please do not allow this bill to proceed.

To the authors and supporters of this bill I ask:

Exactly what part of – “Our nation and state is beyond flat broke don’t you understand?”

Why can’t you understand that we are in a recession and possibly headed for double digit inflation?

Do you know that Oregon has the 7th highest unemployment rate in the nation?

Why is it that you can only solve problems by raising our taxes and fees?

Why do you have such an aversion to looking at the root of the problem and solving it there?

Don’t you understand this bill is a Band-Aid on a hemorrhaging artery?

Is this how you handle your own personal finances? Do you keep spending even though you don’t have the money?

This bill is subterfuge at it finest. The public school system is not suffering from a shortfall in operating expenses; it is suffering from poorly negotiated wage contracts with the Education Unions. The negotiators have fallen under the guise that the unions care about our children.

That has been a lie for decades. It is not about quality education, it is not about the children it is about POWER.

Read their own words.

Indeed, it was Sam Lambert, Secretary of the National Education Association, who told the teachers in 1967 that “The NEA will become a stronger and more influential advocate of social changes long overdue.... The NEA will become a political power second to no other special interest group.... And, finally, NEA will organize this profession from top to bottom into logical operating units that can move easily and effectively and with power unmatched by any other organized group.”¹

To:
 Rep. Ander Crenshaw
 President Barack Obama
 Sen. Bill Nelson
 Sen. Marco Rubio

February 24, 2011

"Despite what some among us would like to believe it is not because of our creative ideas. It is not because of the merit of our positions. It is not because we care about children and it is not because we have a vision of a great public school for every child. NEA and its affiliates are effective advocates because we have power." statement from retiring NEA lawyer Bob Chanin.²

It is not as if our schools have a fixed income, they are automatically given rate increases which are tied to our property tax rates. This bill is attempting to overcome the shortfall from the PERS outlay that the Unions have garnered for themselves.

"The net increase for all employers within the state's Public Employees Retirement System, from an amount equivalent to 5.2 percent of payroll now to an amount equivalent to 10.8 percent starting in July, had been calculated at the start of the year. In all, their PERS rates will cost a combined \$2 billion in 2011-13, up from \$884 million in 2009-11."³

Next I would like to show you some rather alarming numbers, in my opinion. First understand that we, my wife and I, are retired and living on Social Security, you see we bought into the lie that SSI would take care of us. Remember our last raise was two years ago and inflation is already starting to rear its ugly head. Food is up 2.1% and energy is up 7.1%⁴ But then, Obama promised under his plan energy prices will necessarily sky-rocket.⁵

• ESD LINN-BTN-LINC	71.07
• LBCC	117.00
• LEB COMM SD #9	1,163.78
EDUCATION TOTAL:	1,351.85
LINN COUNTY	322.56
LINN COUNTY LOC OP	592.65
LEBANON RFD	572.39
• LEBANON AQUATIC	60.78
• 4H EXTENSION DISTRICT	13.17
GENERAL GOVT TOTAL:	1,561.55
• LBCC BND	45.66
• LEB COMM SD #9 BND	531.79
LEBANON RFD BOND	55.82
FORESTRY FIRE TIMBER	18.75
FORESTRY FIRE SURCHARGE	47.50
BONDS - OTHER TOTAL:	699.52

Each one of the line items that has a ● next to it is a school tax.

So you can see from the numbers that I pay \$3,612.92 in total property tax. (\$1351.85 + \$1561.55 + 699.52)

Of that \$3,612.92, \$2,003.25 is for schools or 55% (\$71.07 + \$117.00 + \$1163.78 + \$60.78 + \$13.17 + \$45.66 + \$531.79)

If you increase that amount by 30% I will pay \$2,604.23 for schools and \$1609.67 for other services for a total of \$4213.90 or 61.8% for schools.

If you increase that amount by 50% I will pay \$3004.88 for schools and \$1609.67 for other services for a total of \$4614.55 or 65.1% for schools.

So you can see my plight. How will any of us on a fixed income retirement be able to afford the lavish pension plans the unions have carved out for themselves solely supported by we the tax payers?

Finally I conclude with these facts:

For the second consecutive budget cycle, the State School Fund (K-12) is being raided to give to the Dept. of Human Services (DHS). Since the last budget cycle, DHS has been split into DHS and the new Oregon Health Authority (OHA). Last budget cycle, \$150 million was taken from the schools and DHS grew by \$330 million. In the Governor's proposed budget released yesterday, \$225 million more would be taken from the schools and the DHS & OHA General & Lottery Funds would grow by \$333 million more.⁶

Clearly the schools have too much money or is it the legislature doesn't feel they are as important as DHS.

So why is this bill being perpetrated upon us?

Is it really all about the children? It would seem not since money is being taken away from them each year.

1. <http://www.thenewamerican.com/index.php/culture/education/6662-the-power-of-teachers-unions>

2. http://www.congress.org/congressorg/bio/userletter/?id=3181&letter_id=6528694721

3. The Register-Guard, Sept. 25, 2010

4. <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/cpi.nr0.htm>

5. <http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2009/jun/11/mike-pence/pence-claims-obama-said-energy-costs-will-skyrocke/>

6. <http://oregoncatalyst.com/7040-governors-proposed-budget-raids-k-12-school-funds-to-grow-dhs-again.html>

