

Oregon Center for Christian Values

Senate Finance and Revenue Committee

March 11 2011

SB 349

MEASURE: SB 349
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Senate Finance and Revenue 76th Session

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SUBMITTED BY: Shoshon Tama-Sweet

Chair Burdick, Vice Chair Morse, and Members of the Committee:

For the Record, I am Shoshon Tama-Sweet, Director of the Oregon Center for Christian Values.

I am here to testify in support of SB 349.

We all know that Oregon has been hit hard by the great recession. We know that in many communities around the state, unemployment remains in double digits. As a community, our focus needs to be job creation. SB 349 will support job creation in Oregon by putting money directly into the hands of our working neighbors who don't have enough income. Studies show that this money is spent directly in local communities, generating economic activity, improving livelihoods, and generating growth.

But there are additional considerations beyond economic pragmatism for supporting this bill. The words carved on the front of this building suggest that governments take on the character of their citizens; and that if citizens are just and fair, then government will be the same. Members of the committee, the hardworking residents of Oregon are just and fair. They are good people. They are our neighbors.

In the Bible, the book of Leviticus instructs us:

“When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. ¹⁰ Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the LORD your God.” Leviticus 9.

Today, the harvest for our neighbors is meager. The Federal Government has shown mercy in not extracting too much. It is not fair for the Government of Oregon to pick over the harvest a second time. Leave what income is left for the poor and the foreigner to meet their basic needs.

I look forward to the day when Oregon fully embraces the Biblical principles of economic fairness. Senate Bill 349 moves us one step closer toward becoming a healthy community; please give it your support.

Thank you.