



## NeighborImpact

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April 8, 2013

House Revenue Committee  
Oregon House of Representatives  
900 Court St SE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear House Revenue Committee members,

We recently learned that this Tuesday, April 9, you will be taking Public Comment on HB2456, creating a sunset for deductions related to charitable contributions.

In my 27 year career in nonprofit and government management I have never seen a bill (along with its companion HB2001) create such a grassroots furor. I am receiving phone calls at home from volunteers with small nonprofits and individuals affiliated with the faith community urging my organization to weigh in on this issue. The callers are bewildered, insulted and suspicious that their state government would assault the institutions that they hold dear.

We can debate the technical merits of a sunset all day long. Others are already doing that, so I'll leave that to them. The bigger concern for me is that this bill and this potential action is further eroding already low trust in state government by lawmakers. It is causing stress for nonprofits which already face significant stress as the federal and state governments make tough decisions which are shifting burdens from government to nonprofits and communities.

It also seems downright hypocritical. Having just hurried to gather to rush through a large, multi-decade tax break for a shoe manufacturing company offering a limited number of jobs in Oregon and having rushed through tax breaks for the emerging data center industry last year, now the legislature says it needs revenue and therefore must potentially harm agencies which relieve government of significant burden, encourage engagement in our fraying civil society infrastructure and incentivizes citizens to take responsibility for needs in their own communities.

Central Oregon nonprofits account for approximately 20 percent of the employment base in this region. We are still struggling to recover from the effects of the recession. This bill, in a session which is all about bringing things back to "normal" seems wrong-headed and mis-timed. Let's get our communities working again before we further tear apart essential systems which support gainful employment and essential services throughout our state.

Sincerely,

Scott Cooper  
Executive Director