

April 15, 2013

Sen. Ginny Burdick
Committee on Finance and Revenue
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Burdick and Members of the Committee:

I write as a taxpayer, a mother of 3 young Oregonians and a Portland Public Schools board member to thank you for taking up the urgent issue of comprehensive tax reform. I am grateful for your leadership and hope that the Governor and your colleagues will recognize the absolute urgency of this issue.

My children, the 47,000 children in Portland Public Schools, and all the children of Oregon have been shortchanged by years of disinvestment in public education. We cannot attract the companies and jobs we need when we lack a stable and adequate education system and when we rely on volatile income taxes to fund public services. As a state, we have a strong network of public and nonprofit partners, and we know what works to give Oregonians the opportunity to succeed in life. Yet without sufficient public investment we are squandering resources by paying for prison cells rather than investing upfront in early childhood education, safe and stable housing, and preventive health care. I fear for future of our state. Our economy will not fully recover, let alone thrive, as long as we suffer under this outdated, inefficient and unfair system of taxation.

Thank you for holding hearings on Comprehensive Tax Reform, which I hope will help lay the groundwork for long overdue action to sensibly update the way we tax ourselves (and the many visitors to our state!) for the services we need and want. Do not be discouraged by the "anti" voices you hear. Although trust is low, and the misinformation is widespread, with a persistent effort and strong leadership we can change things for the better. I and many, many others like me who are desperately eager for tax reform, stand ready to support and help you in any way we can.

Thank you again for your leadership. I eagerly look forward to hearing about next steps and a plan of action to move forward with common-sense tax reform.

Sincerely,



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