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**STATE REPRESENTATIVE**  
DISTRICT 15  
**SPEAKER PRO TEM**

**HB 2407 -- Political Tax Credit**

May 2, 2013

Senator Ginny Burdick, Co-Chair  
Representative Phil Barnhart, Co-Chair  
Joint Committee on Tax Credits  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97310

Co-Chair Burdick and Barnhart and Members of the Committee,

According to a CNN exit poll in 2012, 44 percent of Oregon voters had an annual income of less than \$50,000.00 per year.

In this era when wealthy individuals, unions and large businesses increasingly use their money to influence the electoral process, it is more important than ever that we re-commit ourselves to the principle that our authority comes from the individual people of Oregon.

The political tax credit at its core says that we value the decision-making ability of the people of Oregon. Any authority that we have in the legislature is derived from the citizens of Oregon. All Oregonians, regardless of their economic situation, should have a say in choosing their representatives.

Additionally, in a time of economic hardship, when a large number of Oregonians are struggling to find work, it is even more important that we re-affirm this principle.

This is not in any way a partisan bill. This bill allows a citizen to receive a tax credit of \$50 when he/she donates to any state political action committee. It leaves the partisan policy decisions to the individual voter. People are free to send their money to any political action committee they choose regardless of political affiliation. In this way the political tax credit also promotes electoral involvement.

Oregon has long been at the top of the nation in terms of voter participation. Many analysts attribute this to our vote by mail system, but I believe that the political tax credit also lends to that point.

When a person financially invests in a candidate or cause, they are much more likely to educate themselves about the issues and be active in the political process. The political tax credit removes the financial barrier that many people face to participate in this way.

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Thus this bill promotes voter participation, education and reaffirms an underlying value that that our authority comes from the people of Oregon and that all Oregonians are equal and deserve to be equally represented in the political process.

I urge you to move this bill as is with no amendments. Thank you for your time.

Andy Olson  
State Representative, Albany

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