

Richard B. Pierce
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House District 38
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Testimony offered before
The State of Oregon House Revenue Committee, Feb. 22, 2013

Phil Barnhart, Chair
Jules Bailey, Vice-Chair
Vicki Berger, Vice-Chair
Cliff Bentz
Jason Conger
John Davis
Sara Gelser
Tobias Read
Jessica Vega Pederson

Introduction:

My name is Richard B. Pierce. I live in Rep. Chris Garrett's district at 105 Kingsgate Road, Lake Oswego, Oregon 97035. I am the Clackamas County Chair of the Vulnerable Homeowners Association. I testified last year before this committee.

Intuitively we know that the Deferred Property Tax Program saves the State of Oregon money that it would otherwise be mandated to spend on senior citizens requiring Assisted Living or low income housing. Factually we don't know the answer to that question.

Question:

In September of 2012 from Rep. Garrett's office I requested an analysis of the cost to the state for implementing the closing of the deferred property tax program. Russ Cassler agreed to make that request and indicated that it might take a while to get it. That data will require a cross check between the Department of Revenue and state agencies supporting senior citizens. Additionally he would ask the Department of Revenue for a statement of the current financial position of Deferred Property Tax program. So far he has had no response.

Background:

Last year when I testified I stated that I purchased my home in Lake Oswego for \$269,900 in March 2010. When paying my property tax in person, the clerk at the Clackamas County Assessor's Office recruited me into the Deferred Property Tax program. I signed up after checking with my personal banker and the State of Oregon's Department of Revenue. I was eligible, the program was popular, and there was no talk of discontinuing it.

Based on that advice, I proceeded to spend money reserved for taxes on remodeling the house to make it safer for someone with my disabilities. [I am a Viet Nam Vet with a 70% disability arising from diabetes, peripheral neuropathy and peripheral vascular disease.]

Requests:

1. Make your decision about changes in the Deferred Property Tax Program based on data that you request from the Oregon Department of Revenue.

2. Based on what I believe that data will show, grandfather into the Deferred Property Tax Program those of us previously notified that we would be accepted into the Deferred Property Tax Program for the 2011 / 2012 tax years.

If you chose not to make those changes, I will be forced out of my home through foreclosure and into subsidized low-income assisted living.

Thank you for your consideration.