



ECONOMIC FAIRNESS OREGON

*Consumer Advocacy • Economic Security*

March 12, 2013

Re: Support for HB 2477 and HB 2850

Dear Chair Tomei, Vice Chair Gomberg, Vice Chair Olson, and Members of the Committee:

Economic Fairness Oregon asks you to support HB 2477 and HB 2850. These bills would allow working Oregonians to continue receiving the Oregon EITC, and provide a path out of poverty for low- and moderate-income families.

Economic Fairness Oregon is a consumer advocacy non-profit that works to protect consumers and homeowners through legislative action and policy work. The EITC plays a significant role in the well-being of working-class Oregonians all around the state, and allows individuals to pay rent, buy groceries, or save a little for emergencies. As we have seen in our work with homeowners and consumers, it is often the small things that push a family into financial crisis and lead to medical debt, foreclosure, and other unforeseen tragedies. It is essential that lawmakers renew the state credit and strengthen it to make sure it remains meaningful to struggling Oregonians.

The EITC is one of the most effective and important programs for hardworking families. Each year, millions of Americans use this credit to help make ends meet, save for the future, or get out of debt. This anti-poverty program allows individuals to put money back into the local economy, retain their stable housing and build families. These hardworking individuals deserve the chance to get ahead and prepare their children for a healthy future. Our state will be better off if the next generation has a chance at success.

Renewing Oregon's Earned Income Tax Credit is an essential decision that needs to happen this year. Again we urge your support of HB 2477 and HB 2850 which together would extend the sunset on the Oregon state EITC, and build on the Governor's budget by expanding the Oregon EITC to 18% of the federal credit allowing families to earn wages above the poverty level before paying state taxes.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony.