



From the desk of
Rep. Sara Gelsler

Service Employees International Union, Local 503, OPEU

Vote YES on HB 2456-A

There is still a record demand for services.

1 in 3 Oregonians rely on the state for food or medical care or both. 1 in 4 Oregon children are in poverty.

When it comes to protecting abused and neglected children two workers are trying to do the work of three. The same is true when it comes to helping seniors and Oregonians with disabilities find a place to live.

Seniors have seen cuts to hours in in-homecare. Working parents have lost subsidies for day care.

The Co-Chairs' DHS/OHA budget is short \$130M General Fund from the Governor's Recommended Budget. The Co-Chairs' budget relies on a shared sacrifice of \$800M in PERS savings and \$275M in tax increases. \$800M and \$275M are not equal shares.

Income inequality has grown steadily worse since Wall Street crashed the economy in 2008.

The economic recovery has not lifted all boats.

According to a recent report from economist Joseph Stiglitz, "the top 1 percent of income earners took home 93 percent of the growth in incomes in 2010; the households in the middle have lower household incomes, adjusted for inflation, than they did in 1996." Oregon voters very much feel this even though they do not use the phrase "income inequality."

Voters are concerned about spending. However, the spending they are most concerned about is on the tax expenditure side. There is a tremendous sense that someone is getting ahead in the system, and it is not the normal Oregonian. The perception is that it is someone with the resources to hire the accountants, game the system, and avoid the taxes.

Oregon's tax system is fairer than many states, yet the poorest 20% pay a larger share of their income in taxes than upper income Oregonians. House Bill 2456 is a modest yet important step in the right direction towards funding our schools and other services.

How we treat our children, the vulnerable, and those in the twilight of life speaks to who we are as a people.

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