



SB 683 A new spending program when we have no new money to Spend

Testimony for Senate Rules – Elsa Porter – 3.6.2017

Unless the money for this is coming from outside the state, this is another example of a good idea in need of state revenues that simply do not exist. SB 683 asks you to create a new, and important service. It's a good idea, and we support its purpose, but it is an ask for a new program, despite the fact that the current budget has a \$1.6 B shortfall, and there is currently no reason to think the next biennium, when this bill takes effect, will be better. If you choose to support this measure, you are also deciding to cut something else.

Tax Fairness Oregon would be delighted to support innovative proposals like SB 683, but we want to remind you that every grant, appropriation or tax incentive you approve reduces the life blood of Oregon. You need to be helping Ways and Means by deciding which good ideas to move forward and which to not move out of your committee, and this bill will impact the state's budget, even if it cleverly leaves the impact until another biennium.

Keep the following facts and figures in mind when you make your decision on SB 683:

- Every \$85,000 you invest in another program would buy a teacher for an overcrowded classroom in your district.
- Every dollar that goes to the new program reduces the number of dollars available for Oregon Opportunity Grants.
- Every million you spend on better election outcomes means 350 families won't get rent assistance so they can stay in their homes (via the Emergency Housing Account), or
- Every million you spend on stamps means there will be no funds for 100 eligible children to attend high quality preschool, benefiting them and their families their entire lives. There are more than 20,000 eligible children (below 200% of poverty level) that we don't reach now.

Tax Fairness Oregon strongly believes that until Oregon has a fundamentally fair and adequate revenue stream that can support the basic needs of its citizens, the legislature should not be considering new ways to spend money – via new programs, tax incentives or grants for new bright ideas.

We read the bills and follow the money