

Testimony in Support of HB 2051  
Jen Hernandez  
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Chair Barnhart, Vice-chairs Bentz and Smith Warner, members of the committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak with you today. For the record, my name is Jen Hernandez and I am speaking on behalf of SEIU Oregon State Council. I am testifying in support of HB 2051.

Oregon voters have made it clear that the kicker system is here to stay. We believe if the kicker is to continue, we should make sure that it benefits the state through increased economic activity.

Although the kicker amount varies year to year, HB 2051 will make our income tax more progressive and provide a positive impact for families looking to make ends meet. When paying income taxes, most people do not expect to see that money come back into their pockets, so no one is losing but by equalizing the amount people get back we could make sure those tax dollars benefit our state economy and overall Oregonians who need it most. By putting more in the pockets of middle class Oregonians, we would ensure that it would be spent back into the economy quickly.

We do think that the bill should have one change. We don't think it's appropriate for people who live in Oregon part time to receive the same kicker amount as those who reside in our state full time. If this bill moves forward, we would recommend that gets changed.

Again, while we don't believe Oregon's kicker system is the right economic policy in place to provide long-term stability in our state, we support HB 2051 because of the positive benefit it will have on our local economy by putting these funds into the hands of those who will use it most directly.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.