

Testimony in favor of HB 2876

Dear Committee Chair Barnhart, Vice Chairs Bentz and Smith Warner, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for hearing testimony on HB 2876 to increase taxes on the wealthiest Oregon residents. I urge you to pass this legislation.

Last night, a group of about 40 people (including a gaggle of children) from 10 different N/NE Portland schools attended a community meeting on the effects of the state's budget cuts and long term budget woes. We spoke of the challenges of what the cuts to education and social services look like for our own communities. We shared outrage, frustration, and exasperation at the stories coming from our schools. At my children's elementary, we are losing the Vice Principal (who spends much time working on behavior issues with kids because we don't have enough staffing already to deal with this), cuts to PE and library, a kindergarten and 2nd grade teacher, and another school specialist who assists with the sideeffects of kids dealing with economic and domestic distress.

I am a proud Oregon public school graduate, from the days before Measure 5, and remember looking at how the state general fund would be affected when that measure passed. I remember thinking that there was no way our state would allow education and services to be cut as economists figured out the 5/10 year general fund impact back in 1991. And, yet, it's been 25 years (!), and I'm terrified that our schools won't be able to recover if we don't raise revenue now. There is nothing left to cut except for services and staff who make a daily difference in the lives of our kids. This is literally the future of our state, and we HAVE to invest in them.

Our schools can't wait and we can't face more cuts. Thank you for all you are doing and your work to seek new revenue sources. We will support you i your efforts and ask you to be bold. Oregon's future is worth the investment.

Yours Sincerely,

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