

ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES *of* OREGON

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Statement on HB 2830

EMO calls on Oregon's elected leaders to create an equitable system of taxation that adequately funds a strong safety-net

June 13, 2017

Chairs Hass and Barnhart, and Members of the Joint Committee on Tax Reform:

My name is Britt Conroy, and I am Public Policy Director of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. I speak today on behalf of the 24 faith leaders that comprise EMO's board of directors.

EMO is a statewide association of over 140 Christian denominations, congregations, ecumenical organizations and interfaith partners working together to improve the lives of Oregonians through community ministry programs. These programs feed the hungry, house those in need, support those living with HIV and AIDS, protect survivors of domestic violence, resettle refugees and provide opportunity to thousands every year.

We seek state leaders to partner far more deeply in this effort. We seek a government that is more fully responsive to human needs and aspirations.

We are called to act in solidarity with those on the margins, to establish social and economic systems that encourage, enable and empower all people to develop and use their capabilities to meet their needs and to contribute to the social welfare.

Sadly, Oregon's education system, anti-poverty and hunger programs, and many other government services are not meeting the needs of Oregonians, particularly those living on the margins. Meanwhile, Oregon has the lowest corporate taxes in the country.

EMO thanks Oregon's legislative leadership for making revenue reform a priority this session. We call on this committee to see HB 2830 as a starting point for creating an equitable system of taxation that adequately funds core public functions. And as this committee evaluates how best to offset the CAT's impact on Oregon's low-income residents, we urge your consideration of tax credit proposals that target those most in need of such assistance.

Thank you for your consideration, and for embracing this opportunity to support the well-being of all Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Britt Conroy
Public Policy Director, EMO