

Oregon Center for Christian Voices

6-13-17 Testimony to Joint Committee on Tax Reform: HB2830

Co-chairs Barnhart and Hass and members of the Committee;

My name is Karen Nettler, and I am here on behalf of Oregon Center for Christian Voices. We are relieved and grateful that a proposal is now before you to increase corporate tax rates. Thank you for taking this critically needed step, because for many of our neighbors, the needs continue to be truly critical.

It may be that my experience in social services and my faith upbringing helped sensitize me to the pain that is all around us in people who lack the means to provide for their most basic needs. But it doesn't take faith or personal experience to realize that something is amiss when, in spite of their best efforts, people lack health insurance, affordable housing, good schools, when the frail, sick and elderly are often literally left to fend for themselves. What it does take is the willingness to look around and see the brokenness that affects us all, to acknowledge that it is on us all when people who are doing their very best to provide for themselves and their families just don't have the resources that give them the security they must have to participate in our life together as community.

My faith tradition says that the success or failure of our government policies can be judged by how well those most at risk in our community are doing. As you see the needs before you, and as you consider what it will take to repair what has been broken by years of insufficient funding, our hope is that this will be an issue of heart, of justice, of compassion, not a partisan issue. We don't advocate in favor of one political party over the other, we do it because our neighbors are suffering, because a healthy society sees the value both pragmatically and morally of caring for those who are the most vulnerable, whose very lives and well-being are at stake. We urge you to use this revenue discussion to see clearly those needs, and to sufficiently fund the services that will restore to us all to a more healthy community.

Respectfully submitted,

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