



HB 2038 A New Spending Program when We Have No New Money to Spend

Testimony for House Ag and Natural Resources – 2.14.2017

Oregon is known nationally for coming up with bright and creative ideas and crafting innovative legislation—remember McCall’s bottle bill! And we are equally famous for what the Oregonian called “historical over-commitments” (1.29.2017)—that result in loudly rejecting the taxing structures that would actually support those bright and innovative ideas! Case in point—a Quality Education Model that is underfunded by \$2 billion!

HB 2038 is another example of a clever idea in need of state revenues to come to fruition. HB 2038 asks you to create a new program, despite the fact that the current budget has a \$1.8 B shortfall. If you choose to support this measure, you are also deciding that Oregon’s children can do with fewer teachers or days of school.

Tax Fairness Oregon would be delighted to support innovative proposals like HB 2038, but we want to remind you that every grant, appropriation or tax incentive you approve reduces the life blood of Oregon.

Keep the following facts and figures in mind when you make your decision on HB 2038 in this challenging budget cycle:

- Every \$85,000 you invest in another program would buy a teacher for an overcrowded classroom in your district.
- Divide the requested money by \$42.00; that buys an additional day of schooling for a child in your district.
- And \$24.7 million buys an additional day of school for every student in Oregon.

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.