

06 February 2022

To the House Committee on Human Services

Dear Chair Representative Williams, Vice-Chairs Representative Ruiz and Scharf, and members of the committee:

Regarding House Bill 4079

Advocates for this tax get very specific—when they want to. Representative Witt tells us the proposed tax would generate about \$28 million a year in additional tax revenue for the state government. This ignores mountains of evidence, going back for generations, showing that raising taxes does not automatically mean raising tax revenues – and has often actually led to falling tax revenues. A fantasy expressed in numbers is still a fantasy.

The cry to tax the rich is spouted often, but what it actually means is taxing *more*. This so-called Oregon Freedom Pilot Program could not be more ill-named. Freedom? The promoters cry that it's only for luxury items. That, members of Committee, is code for "the rich". And terms like *the rich* and *fair share* are used not to convey any facts, but simply to arouse emotions.

The definition of those in need continues to evolve, with more and more qualifying as such simply as a result of the standard for being *in need* is continuously lowered. The fact is that everyone is in need of one thing or another.

This tax, to be paid to the state government by the taxpayer—is given without any return.

There are already enough taxes, fees, surcharges and the like, yet the promoters of this legislation do not hesitate to add to our burdens.

There is no evidence that implementing this tax will improve anyone's welfare. At best it will simply promote and establish more of a welfare state in Oregon.

This tax will only open the door to further taxation. As history shows, if this passes, the rate will inevitably grow along with the list of items to be taxed.

I urge you to table this bill and let it go no further.

Sincerely,



Richard Wisner
Lincoln County