



House Committee on Human Services  
900 Court St NE, Room 453  
Salem, OR 97301

Submitted via: <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2022R1/Testimony/HHS>

February 7, 2022

**Bill Harvey**  
Commission Chair  
bharvey@bakercounty.org

Dear Committee:

Baker County opposes House Bill 4079 for the following reasons:

1. HB 4079 is undeniably, and, as stated by the sponsor, a sales tax, and as such, it must go to the voters for approval, or denial. As a sales tax, it cannot evade being an amendment to the Constitution and therefore, “Any amendment or amendments to this Constitution may be proposed in either branch of the legislative assembly, and if the same shall be agreed to by a majority of all the members elected to each of the two houses, such proposed amendment or amendments shall, with the yeas and nays thereon, be entered in their journals and referred by the secretary of state to the people for their approval or rejection, at the next regular general election, except when the legislative assembly shall order a special election for that purpose...” (Art. XVII §1)
2. Art. IX § (3)(a) The people reserve to themselves the referendum power, which is to approve or reject at an election any Act, or part thereof, of the Legislative Assembly that does not become effective earlier than 90 days after the end of the session at which the Act is passed. This bill does not become effective until 91 days “after the date on which the 2022 regular session of the Eighty-first Legislative Assembly adjourns sine die.”
3. “We are looking at ways to recover from the pandemic,” Witt said, “and ways in which we can begin to break the chain of poverty so it doesn’t become a generational issue.”

Too late. Poverty is already a generational issue propagated by a state welfare system that does not wish to solve the problems by incentivizing employment over guaranteed income for not working.

Several times, the Oregon legislature wanted to vote in a sales tax without replacing other taxes. But because they’ve repeatedly demonstrated that the state agencies are bad at managing money,

Oregonians have voted against this. The reluctance of Oregon voters against sales tax has everything to do with money mismanagement and mistrust of how the sales tax will improve the lives of all Oregonians, not just a select few. The legislature and special interest groups that are pro-sales tax, fail to recognize that. The situations that cultivate poverty must be fixed prior to any consideration in implementing a tax that would burden Oregonians that are, themselves, struggling to make ends meet.

HB 4079 is just another example of the disregard of the legislature to fix the problem before throwing other people's hard earned money at it.

4. If approved by the legislature, the state should fund the Freedom Pilot Program with existing revenue and pandemic relief dollars rather than through implementing new taxes.
5. This is terrible time to instigate new taxes that will impact small businesses which have been hurt through the pandemic lockdowns. It will be less expensive for Oregonians to do business on-line or in other states. This sales tax will successfully take money out of Oregonian businesses pockets.

Baker County strongly opposes HB 4079. The County would support fixing the problems that this sales tax is to address, rather than use the tax to redistribute wealth through a broken welfare system. This is nothing more than a stair step to full socialism.

Sincerely,



Bill Harvey, Chairman  
Baker County Commission