

Submitter: D Torres
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB143
Chair & Committee Members,

I OPPOSE SB 143.

This bill originated as a study, which we all may have supported in the spirit of responsible policymaking—seeking data, stakeholder input, and a deeper understanding of how best to support Oregon’s workforce systems. However, I am deeply concerned that the -2 amendment moves far beyond a study. It enacts a significant policy change by increasing the diversion rate of the Supplemental Employment Department Administrative Fund (SEDAF) to 0.135%, without the benefit of the comprehensive analysis that the original study intended.

Here are my Key Concerns:

1. Premature Policy Change Without Data

The proposed diversion increase has not been fully vetted through the study's intended process. Making a permanent funding shift without the benefit of findings or recommendations undermines the original intent of the legislation and may lead to unintended consequences.

2. Impacts on Core Workforce Services

The SEDAF supports essential employment services across Oregon, including job training, career counseling, and re-employment assistance. Increasing the diversion rate reduces the resources available for these core services at a time when many Oregonians are still recovering from economic disruptions. Any change to the fund’s distribution must be carefully weighed to avoid destabilizing vital programs.

3. Lack of Stakeholder Engagement

As stakeholders committed to equitable and effective workforce development, we were not adequately consulted on the impacts of the proposed funding shift. A decision of this magnitude should not be made without broad stakeholder input from local workforce boards, community-based organizations, and affected state agencies.

4. Risk of Setting a Precedent

This amendment may set a concerning precedent—converting a study bill into a funding reallocation tool late in the legislative process, without due deliberation. Doing so may erode public trust in legislative transparency and process.

I sincerely urge the Committee to reject the -2 amendment and allow the original

study to proceed as intended. If funding realignment is found necessary, it should be proposed based on data, collaborative stakeholder input, and a public and transparent process, not in the guise of a study turned into an amendment with which one would need to read the amendment to find out the intent of the bill. This type of legislation feels underhanded and not appropriate and based on the way this bill has moved forward and presented alone should encourage everyone to say NO.