

Submitter: Blake Rhulen
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: 2026 Agency Reduction Options

Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Re: No Cuts to the Tax Infrastructure Grant Program

Co Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committee,
My name is Blake Rhulen, and I am a volunteer with Metropolitan Family Service's CASH Oregon program. I am writing to respectfully urge you to maintain full funding for the Tax Infrastructure Grant program.

This program is a proven investment in both affordability for Oregon families and responsible state budgeting. As a result of this program, many more Oregonians are paying taxes and filing tax returns. As we all know, filing taxes is complicated and can be overwhelming so our service to the community provides a way for taxpayers to do this, when it's proven that without this service many individuals and families just wouldn't file at all. The Tax Infrastructure Grant program is budget positive for the state.

The refunds received by the tax payers we serve help provide critical support for housing, food, utilities, and childcare—especially as many households experience reductions in SNAP and TANF.

In addition to supporting families, the program reduces workload for the Department of Revenue by increasing accurate, on-time filings and assisting taxpayers with prior-year corrections and correspondence.

In a year when affordability and budget balance are top state priorities, the Tax Infrastructure Grant program clearly advances both. I respectfully ask that you oppose any cuts to this program and continue investing in services that strengthen Oregon's tax system and support working families.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Blake M. Rhulen