



Chair Nathanson, Vice Chair Reschke, Vice Chair Walters, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify this afternoon on HB 4125. My name is Brooke Hill and I am submitting testimony today on behalf of Oregon AFSCME. We are a labor union of around 40,000 members advocating for workers and their families in the public and private sectors. Thank you for the opportunity to submit comment for the record today.

Oregon AFSCME stands in support of HB 4125, The Revenue Forecast Modernization Act. As the federal government continues to disinvest in Oregon, it is paramount to protect state dollars and direct them towards the programs we need most. Per the Oregon constitution, the state economist is required to forecast out two years ahead of time. The kicker is triggered if the forecast is off by more than 2%. Our state economists forecast to the best of their ability, but it is impossible to accurately predict economic trends so far in the future.

At a time when our budget landscape is so unpredictable, prioritizing core services like healthcare, SNAP benefits, childcare, and public safety is more important than ever. The Revenue Forecast Modernization Act (HB 4125) is a good government measure to create more accurate revenue predictions and a more stable state budget. Additionally, the kicker rebate is not tied to the need for services or “extra” money for the state. It is merely based on the projection, which can change significantly and rapidly from one biennium to the next.

Allowing stakeholders and members of the public a longer lead time when budgets change is a significant step towards greater transparency in the Legislature, and the budget writing process more generally. This bill would require revenue estimates to be made public each quarter, allowing those who rely on state funding to prepare

Oregonians expect the Legislature to craft a fair, balanced budget that reflects their values and protects core services. Modernization of the revenue forecast is a good first step towards this goal, and I urge your support of HB 4125.

Sincerely,

Brooke Hill (she/her)

AFSCME Political Team