

Submitter: Joseph Stenger
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4125

I strongly support HB 4125, the Revenue Forecast Modernization Act. We are currently struggling with deep budget cuts at a time when we cannot afford that. Yet, we will need to reduce state revenues by returning large amounts of money to wealthy taxpayers. This makes no sense. It is based on requiring the Treasurer to predict far ahead how much revenue to expect. When that estimate is financially prudent but low, we lose. The system needs to be modernized.

This bill will increase the accuracy, reliability and predictability of the forecast. By setting optimistic and pessimistic forecasts, the kicker can be tied to the optimistic number and budget planning to the pessimistic number. If there is revenue above the pessimistic number, that would be used for urgent needs that had not been budgeted, like disaster relief (we will have even more of those as the climate worsens), debt, or unfunded liabilities from PERS.

Since 66% of kicker money has gone to the top 20% of taxpayers - those who don't need it - it really hasn't helped the average Oregonian. Reducing the frequency and amount of kicker will help ease the terrible budget situation, while still returning money to the people when there truly is a banner year of revenue.

Thank you for all your work on behalf of Oregonians!

My name is Joseph Stenger MD. I am on the Steering Committee for MCAT, Mobilizing Climate Action Together. We are a community of experienced volunteers who help steward significant greenhouse gas reduction policy into state law and advocate for an expanding green economy here in Oregon.