

Chair Bowman, Vice Chairs Elmer and Pham, and members of the committee:

For the record, my name is Amanda Orozco. I submit this written testimony in support of House Bill 4143.

After reading all two pages of this bill it is clear that at its core, HB 4143 is not about defying the federal government. **It is about upholding the rule of law when a valid court order is not being honored.**

This bill establishes a narrow, carefully structured mechanism that allows the Governor (only with the consent of the Attorney General and the State Treasurer) to temporarily withhold certain payments owed to the federal government *only* when the federal government is unlawfully withholding funds that a court has already ordered to be released to Oregon. That is an important and deliberate threshold.

HB 4143 does not authorize permanent nonpayment, does not redirect funds for other state uses, and does not interfere with payroll taxes. Any withheld payments are held in a separate, interest-bearing account and must be released once the amount withheld exceeds what the federal government unlawfully owes the state. This structure mirrors an escrow arrangement, not retaliation.

**Importantly, this bill has real-world implications for Oregonians who rely on essential services.** When the federal government unlawfully withholds money, it is often programs serving the most vulnerable that suffer first: food assistance, health care, housing supports, child welfare services, and education. Funding delays can mean longer waitlists, reduced access to care, and disrupted services. HB 4143 helps ensure these programs remain stable, preventing vulnerable Oregonians from being the unintended victims of an intergovernmental dispute.

The bill also protects state employees who are acting under lawful direction from civil liability. Without this safeguard, even a well-designed policy risks becoming unenforceable in practice.

HB 4143 should be viewed as a last-resort accountability tool; one designed to be used sparingly, but necessary to have. It reinforces, rather than erodes, respect for courts and lawful process, while safeguarding essential services that Oregonians rely on every day.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your support for HB 4143.

Thank you for your time and consideration.