

Submitter: Brett Baylor
On Behalf Of: fiscal responsibility
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4125

For decades the State of Oregon has struggled with inaccurate revenue forecasts inherent in attempting to predict fluctuations in revenue in an unpredictable world, and to do so two years in advance. Because of this our state has been unable to capably deal with financial liabilities and the chronic underfunding of state responsibilities. Oregon has become a fiscally irresponsible state, unable to fund its educational, transportation infrastructure, and debt obligations.

It is of note that the variance between the low and high estimates established in this bill do not belong to the general fund, but to a separate fund targeted for addressing debt service and emergencies/catastrophic situations. We have faced many of these over the past years and are already facing two currently – the wavering condition of our roads and bridges and our inability to fund the interstate bridge project, as well as the impending wildfire response that will be required this summer, and in summers to come, due to diminished snow pack and rising temperatures. These are matters of public safety, and the state must responsibly deal with them.

These are exactly the circumstances outlined within HB 4125 for service from the emergency fund. It provides a softer landing for dire problems within our state that we inevitably must deal with.

I urge you to support and to pass this commonsense bill.