

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB4125

Kicker supports fiscal discipline, a value and skill that Oregon state government finds challenging. The argument that this money would be used for wildfire suppression is not compelling; as a former wildland firefighter, I have seen firsthand the ODF "drown the fire with money" fire suppression strategy. This is unnecessary; gaps can be made up with more efficient allocation of resources and more value given to experienced personnel. For example, I worked on an ODF-managed fire complex outside Juntura that was being directed by a 23 year old. My contract crew spent all morning clearing an area to prevent it from sparking up per ODF request, and that afternoon ODF made the decision to burn the brush anyway, wasting about 120 (6 hours work for a 20 man crew) man-hours of effort plus whatever the contract company overhead is. This is just one example of waste where effort and resources could have been allocated more efficiently.

The other key argument in favor would be to provide more funding to K-12 schools. Oregon's schools are ranked among the worst in the nation, despite funding continually increasing. Kentucky, a state with population similar to Oregon, has about half the budget for K-12 education and a middle-tier ranking that is higher than Oregon's education system. More money will not solve the deficiencies present in the Oregon system.

No on revising the kicker calculation, we the people can spend our own money more efficiently than the government.