

Submitter:

Kyla Yeoman

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB4125

I support a modernization of the Kicker because:

- My individual rebate is not enough to pay for private school tuition if public schools fail.
- My individual rebate is not enough to cover healthcare if we shut down the Oregon Health Plan.
- My individual rebate is not enough to protect my own groundwater if the DEQ stops doing it.
- My individual rebate isn't enough to fix a bridge if it needs a seismic upgrade.

We need these funds for projects and services that all Oregonians benefit from. Of course we should budget wisely, spend even more wisely, and hold our elected officials accountable for the outcomes of these expenditures. That's the agreement we make by being part of a society.

As a parent of a 4th grader in a public school, I see the impacts of a weak General Fund every day. Kids are jam-packed with 30 others in a classroom. Reading specialists have been cut, so volunteer parents make up the gaps. Behavioral support specialists have been cut, so children who need customized attention are left to flounder and derail the rest of the class. Teachers are expected to handle much more than just teaching because the problems of society don't just stop at the school door - and it's no wonder some of the best retire early or take other careers. We need full time counselors in every school. We need social support links to food, housing, and healthcare. We need classrooms that aren't 90 degrees in summer and 40 in winter.

Modernizing the kicker is one small step we can take to strengthen our state now and better secure the future for Oregonians. Those who argue otherwise have been steeped in fear-based messaging that builds mistrust for government and suspicion of the collective good. I urge you to support this reform -- and then demonstrate to us you can be trusted to ensure the funds go as far as they can and to benefit as many people as possible.