

Luke Nearhood
2026-02-18
House Committee on Revenue
Testimony in Support of SB1507A

My name is Luke Nearhood, I am the Vice President for Political Action of AFT-Oregon, and a member of local 6069 the Coalition of Graduate Employees, which represent the approximately 1800 graduate teaching and research assistants at Oregon State University. I speak today in my capacity as a student, educator, researcher, and citizen of Oregon.

AFT-OR strongly supports SB1507, for the simple reason that our state cannot afford to maintain the disastrous federal tax cuts and billionaire handouts passed last summer. To do so, to balance Oregon's budget on the backs of working Oregonians by making cuts to essential services such as education, would be a betrayal of Oregon voters who put in place a government in our state that passed a fair and balanced budget prior to these federal cuts. Federal cuts which the majority of Oregonians did not vote for.

To not take action, to not apply a bandage to this gaping wound in our state's capacity to bring in revenue to fund the essential services of the state would be a deep betrayal of the working class.

If the committee will indulge me in a philosophical argument. What are the essential functions of a state? To provide for the common defence and promote the general welfare. To do so requires the state to have the capacity to raise revenue. And by continuing to shackle our tax code to the federal tax code we undermine the very existence of our state.

SB1507 is a decent starting point for avoiding such a fate.

Thank you, Luke Nearhood