

The Finding Funding Project#4

Charge Comcast Interest and Eliminate the Timely Payment Discount for Deferred Taxes

\$ 9 million

Our Situation Now

In 2009, the Department of Revenue called Comcast a “communications company” subject to property tax assessments provided by the Department of Revenue, what’s called “central assessment.” Comcast didn’t like the increased taxes imposed, so headed to court. Eight years later, this issue is still in tax court, with over \$147 million in property taxes still in Comcast’s hands. Tax assessors have deferred their tax payments until the court case is settled, when payment will be due within 45 days.

The Need

The problem is that even if the courts rule against them, Comcast will have won. Comcast will have had the use of that money – free of interest – and they’ll still be eligible for the 3% timely payment discount! Meanwhile, each dollar they owed in 2009 should be \$1.12, just to keep up with inflation. Had taxes due in 2009 been invested in the stock market it would be worth \$2.32 today. Instead, Comcast will pay with a dollar worth less than in 2009.

The Solution

HB 2407 says that when county assessors defer a company’s taxes while they are challenged in court, the company will pay a moderate rate of interest (which fluctuates with the interest market) and will be ineligible for the 3% timely payment discount since they will have the use of the money. No more winning by accumulating unpaid Oregon taxes.

