



HJR 202 - Committing Lottery Revenues for Veterans

Testimony for House Veterans – Jody Wisner

Much as we at Tax Fairness Oregon respect and honor the services of veterans in Oregon, who need and deserve the nation's continued care and support, we oppose asking voters to dedicate Lottery Funds to serve this purpose.

HJR 202 would lock in substantial resources for veterans alone. For the next 34 years, if the lottery generates \$1 billion a biennium, 3%, or \$30 million would be dedicated to veterans. During that time, and after it moves to 2% of lottery and then 1%, the referral requires a super majority in each house for any reduction in amount. The 1% dedication continues forever in the constitution.

The general public is unaware that ultimately the cost of these incremental services to veterans will be borne by school children, college students human and public safety services, all of which suffer already today from underfunding.

It would be helpful to see how much of lottery revenue is currently unencumbered with dedications or bond repayment obligations. We know 33% of lottery revenue is already dedicated to specified uses, but we've bonded indebtedness to which the lottery funds are committed as well. An estimate of what will be left for the General Fund is in order.

Tax Fairness Oregon is of the opinion that the timing of this bill is unfortunate and should await the outcome of IP 28, given the huge PERS debt we face.