



HB 3163: An attempt to reduce seniors' property taxes

House Revenue Committee – Jody Wiser – 2.20.2025

My name is Jody Wiser and I am representing Tax Fairness Oregon, a network of volunteers who advocate a rational and equitable tax code.

It seems there is a drafting error in HB 3163, but we assume it is an attempt to reduce the property taxes of Oregon's seniors, simply because they are 62 or older.

While there are seniors who are distressed financially, a smaller percentage of seniors 65+ face financial distress than other age groups. *

Under 18 16.3%

18-64 11.7%

65 & over 10.9%

We are baffled why bills that reduce the property taxes of seniors are introduced when there are no bills for all homeowners who are distressed financially. A number of states have circuit breakers which reduce property taxes as a share of income for all homeowners. That would be more equitable than bills like this which reduce property taxes only for seniors, and regardless of need.

Further, since we have the Senior Property Tax Deferral Program available to those same seniors, but not available to other homeowners unless they are eligible for social security disability, we are already offering something to seniors not available to younger people who face life altering events like losing their jobs, illnesses or accidents that take them out of the workforce for an extended time.

Attached to my testimony is a short description Oregon's unique Property Tax Deferral Program for those who are unfamiliar with the program. We wish you would allocate \$1,000,000 for an information campaign to alert seniors to this valuable program. It's perfect for those senior homeowners who are "house rich and cash poor." Typically, participation will increase their monthly income by \$200-\$300 a month. Further, you should consider adjustments to that program that clearly allow participation by veterans who have been severely disabled in service.

Since 79% of seniors own their own homes, any reduction in their property taxes will fall heavily on the local community services on which they rely – senior centers, libraries, safe streets and emergency response capacity. County and city budgets are already facing cutbacks. Any bill that would reduce taxes based solely on age would have a drastic impact to the ability of communities to provide basic services.

As an aside, may I suggest that whenever you see a bill that allows the local community to choose to reduce property taxes, the bill should say they can reduce or eliminate property taxes except those for K-12 education, since those dollars are essentially state K-12 dollars. Without that caveat you are allowing them to cut into the General Fund.

Thank you for your time and attention to these vexing issues.

* Poverty statistic for 2022.

**As of July 1, 2023, there were 1,879,586 housing units in Oregon. The owner-occupied housing unit rate in Oregon was 63.4%. $1,879,586 \times .634 = 1,191,657$ owner-occupied homes. 829,738 Oregonians are 65 or older and 79% of that age group own their own homes. Of course some of those seniors are living together. Perhaps as many as 30% of property taxpayers are seniors.



Worried about paying your property taxes?

Check out Oregon's Senior and Disabled Property Tax Deferral Program

Allows seniors 62 and older, and younger homeowners eligible for social security disability, to delay paying their property taxes.

Deferred taxes with 6% interest are due when upon sale, ownership transfer or pass away.

Requirements:

- Home owned and lived in for five or more years
- 2024 household income from all sources of less than \$60,000
- Assets of less than \$500,000 (excluding home & car) – cash, IRA, rental property
- Value of home is limited by county and by number of years owned, for example:

Maximum Home Value Multnomah County	
\$499,240	5-7 years
\$549,164	7-9 years
\$599,088	9-11 years
\$649,012	11-13 years
\$698,936	13-15 years
\$748,860	15-17 years
\$798,784	17-19 years
\$848,708	19-21 years
\$998,480	21-23 years
\$1,123,290	23-25 years

For real market value tables for all counties:

<https://www.oregon.gov/dor/programs/property/Documents/%21%20Website%20RMV%20Table%202025.xlsx>

For what counts as income and to see the application:

https://www.oregon.gov/dor/forms/FormsPubs/form-or-ptda_490-014.pdf

Apply to county assessor January 1 to April 15



We read the bills and follow the money