



OREGON HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE

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Democrats advance tax increase on simple majority vote, setting up potential legal battle

Salem, Ore. - House Democrats today advanced a Senate Bill that will raise over \$28 million dollars of new revenue on a simple majority vote. Republicans argued the bill represented an end-run on the Oregon Constitution because it did not receive the supermajority vote required for revenue raising bills and did not originate in the House, which is also a requirement for revenue raising bills.

In opposing the bill, House Republicans pointed to Article IV Section 18 of the Oregon Constitution, which states:

“Bills may originate in either house, but may be amended, or rejected in the other; except that bills for raising revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives.”

Republicans also cited Article IV Section 25 of the Oregon Constitution, which reads:

“(2) Three-fifths of all members elected to each House shall be necessary to pass bills for raising revenue.”

“When I read the language of the Oregon Constitution, it seems pretty clear. If lawmakers want to raise revenue, the bill must originate in the House and must be passed by a supermajority in both chambers of the Legislature. SB 28 fails to meet both of those requirements. I swore an oath to uphold the Oregon Constitution, even when it might be inconvenient. I am not willing to risk violating that oath by supporting this bill,” said House Republican Leader Mike McLane (R-Powell Butte).

According a [revenue impact statement](#) issued by the Legislative Revenue Office, SB 28 will raise \$5.5 million in the 2017-19 biennium, \$11.1 million in 2019-21 and 11.7 million in 2021-23.

SB 28 passed the Senate on a 17-13 vote, one shy of what is needed for a supermajority. The bill passed the House by a vote of 34-23, two short of the needed requirement. The circumstances surrounding the bill’s passage could result in a potentially precedent setting legal battle.

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