



from the

OREGON HOUSE REPUBLICAN CAUCUS

For Immediate Release

Date: January 31, 2023

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House Republican Caucus Responds to Governor Kotek's Proposed Budget

SALEM, OR – Today, the House Republican Caucus released the following statement in response to Governor Kotek's two-year budget proposal, a \$32.1 billion request, which represents a 8.76% increase over the 2021-2023 legislatively approved budget.

"Oregonians are experiencing an inflation rate over eight percent and economists are predicting a mild recession over the next year. The Governor's budget reflects the financial vulnerability individuals are feeling on a daily basis. House Republicans believe the state budget should look more after Oregon families than our state bureaucracy.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic (2020), the State of Oregon has spent almost \$1 billion in funding on the homelessness crisis. This was done under Governor Kotek's watch as Speaker. Now, Governor Kotek wants to spend another \$305 million over the next two years, not including \$705 million in debt refinancing authority.

Our Caucus is optimistic the Governor's budget does not call for tax increases, but we remain concerned Governor Kotek and her agencies will raise fees on hardworking Oregonians. While the Governor's budget does not take the Kicker, we are committed to returning these hard-earned dollars back to Oregon taxpayers.

The Governor focused her budget on several topics our Caucus has also identified as priorities. However, we are disappointed there was no initial mention of other crises impacting our state such as transportation backlogs, a severe drought impacting our agriculture industry, public safety in our communities, or Oregon's severe public defender crisis.

Even though we are pleased the Governor acknowledged many of the struggles our students are facing, we cannot ignore Oregon's reality as one of the lowest ranking states in student achievement. We believe in funding education with reform to the Oregon Department of Education.

And finally, as the Caucus that represents every corner of our state, one of our greatest concerns remains that the Governor's proposed homelessness initiative does not reach beyond the urban centers of our state. If Governor Kotek is going to stay "Mission Focused" on being a Governor for all of Oregon, this must start now."

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