

May 14, 2019
Testimony to Joint Ways and Means Capitol Construction
No on SB 1049
Firefighter Matt Brozovich

Good evening, Co-Chair Girod and Co-Chair Holvey. Thank you for giving me the time to testify tonight. For the record, my name is Matt Brozovich and I am an Oregon Firefighter. I have the honor and privilege of protecting this building from my station on a daily basis, so to say the least I'm very familiar with it.

The decisions you are making here directly affect my livelihood, so as you can imagine this strikes home for all my brothers and sisters of the Oregon Fire Service.

I have wanted to be a firefighter from a very young age because I want to be a part of something special and give back to my community. I moved to Salem to study fire science at Chemeketa and never left the area. I have raised my family and made my home here.

It has been disappointing to see that my retirement benefits are being used as a political chip. I have a nine-year-old son in the public school system

and I am very pleased with the passage of the Student Success Act. It was a happy day in our house yesterday when we could tell him that soon there will be more money for his education. This will make a tremendous difference in his future.

What I don't yet have the heart to tell him is - because I want him to believe in public service and to respect people elected to office - is that in order for that bill to pass, lawmakers held my retirement hostage and now have a bill that would slash my individual retirement account by 12.5%. I'm a Tier 2 member and I was promised a secure retirement that was already cut once in 2013. This would be the second retirement cut for me that significantly affects my family's security and future. It's time for lawmakers to stop playing political games with our retirements and protect our retirements.

We are careful with our finances and our projections have been based on the salary and benefits we were offered when we were hired, but the cuts in SB 1049 dramatically changes the calculations for us. If it were to pass, I would have to work longer than 30 years, putting my own health and safety at risk.

I urge you to please reject this political deal that will harm families like mine. Please vote no on SB 1049.

Thank you again for your time today.