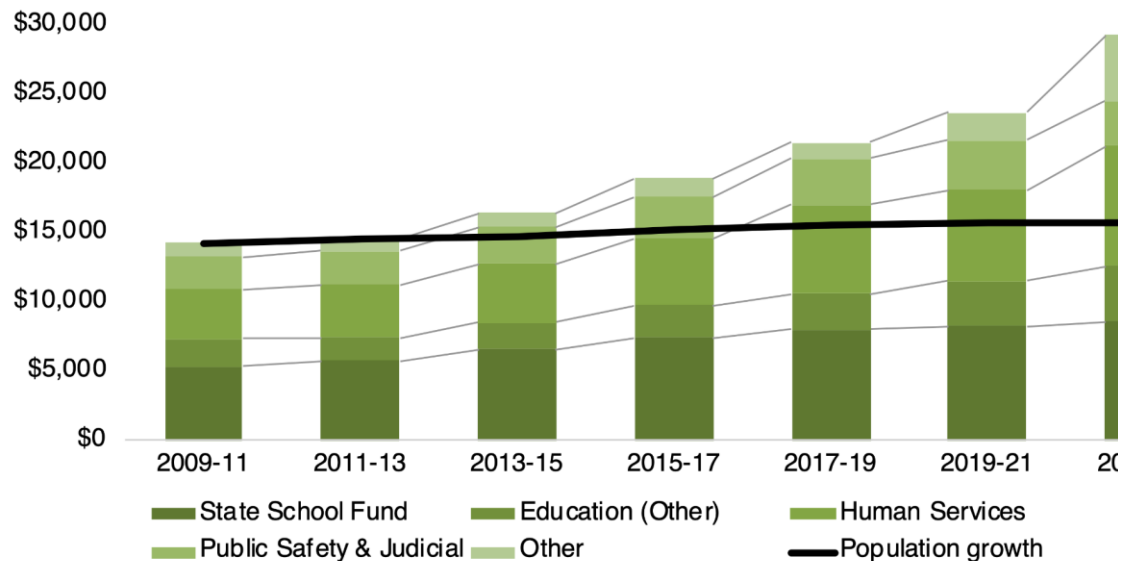


QuickPoint! – Oregon’s Budget: Out-of-Control Spending and Misplaced Priorities

By Eric Fruits, Ph.D.

If you feel like Oregon politicians are spending more, but you’re getting less, you are not alone and you are not crazy. State spending has spun out of control, and we have little to show for it. According to the state budget office, spending from the state’s general and lottery funds has doubled since the Great Recession. That’s a huge increase, especially since Oregon’s population has only grown by 11% since then.

Oregon Budget: General Funds and Lottery Fund



The biggest growth has been in the human services budget, driven by Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act. On top of that, Governor Kate Brown has successfully pushed to expand the Oregon Health Plan to include people who are “not legally present” in the United States. The feds won’t pay for that expansion, so Oregonians are on the hook for these extra costs.

The area that’s seen the lowest growth: public safety. The most recent budget cut nearly half a billion dollars from public safety. It should come as no surprise that we’ve seen a huge spike in crime over the past few years.

Sure, budgets are boring, but a budget is the best indication of politicians’ policy preferences. It’s clear that our politicians prefer spending more money expanding expensive entitlement programs to a few at the expense of providing public safety for all of us. Keep that in mind when your ballots land in your mailbox this fall.

Eric Fruits, Ph.D. is Vice President of Research at Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon’s free market public policy research organization.

Cascade Policy Institute is a tax-exempt educational organization as defined under IRS code 501 (c)(3). Nothing appearing in this Cascade Commentary is to be construed as necessarily representing the views of Cascade or its donors. The views expressed herein are the author’s own.

August 24, 2022

Word Count: 232

Attention editors
and producers:

Cascade Commentaries are provided for reprint in newspapers and other publications, with credit given to author(s) and Cascade. Contact Cascade to arrange print or broadcast interviews on this commentary topic.

Please contact:

Cascade Policy Institute
4850 SW Scholls Ferry Rd.
Suite 103
Portland, Oregon 97225

Phone: (503) 242-0900
Fax: (503) 242-3822

www.cascadepolicy.org
info@cascadepolicy.org

4850 SW Scholls Ferry Road
Suite 103
Portland, Oregon 97225

t: 503.242.0900
f: 503.242.3822
info@cascadepolicy.org
www.cascadepolicy.org

