



# Eastern Oregon Border Board

Strengthening Our Region's Economic Future

# Background on Border Board

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- Far eastern Oregon is economically depressed relative to the rest of Oregon and compared to thriving Idaho communities mere miles away.
- Far Eastern Oregon's growth is stagnant and losing businesses and residents to Idaho at a staggering rate.
- Neighboring Idaho's very different political landscape and policies create unique challenges for our region.
- In 2019, B 2012 created the Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Region, Board, and Fund to address these issues.

# Border Region – At a Glance



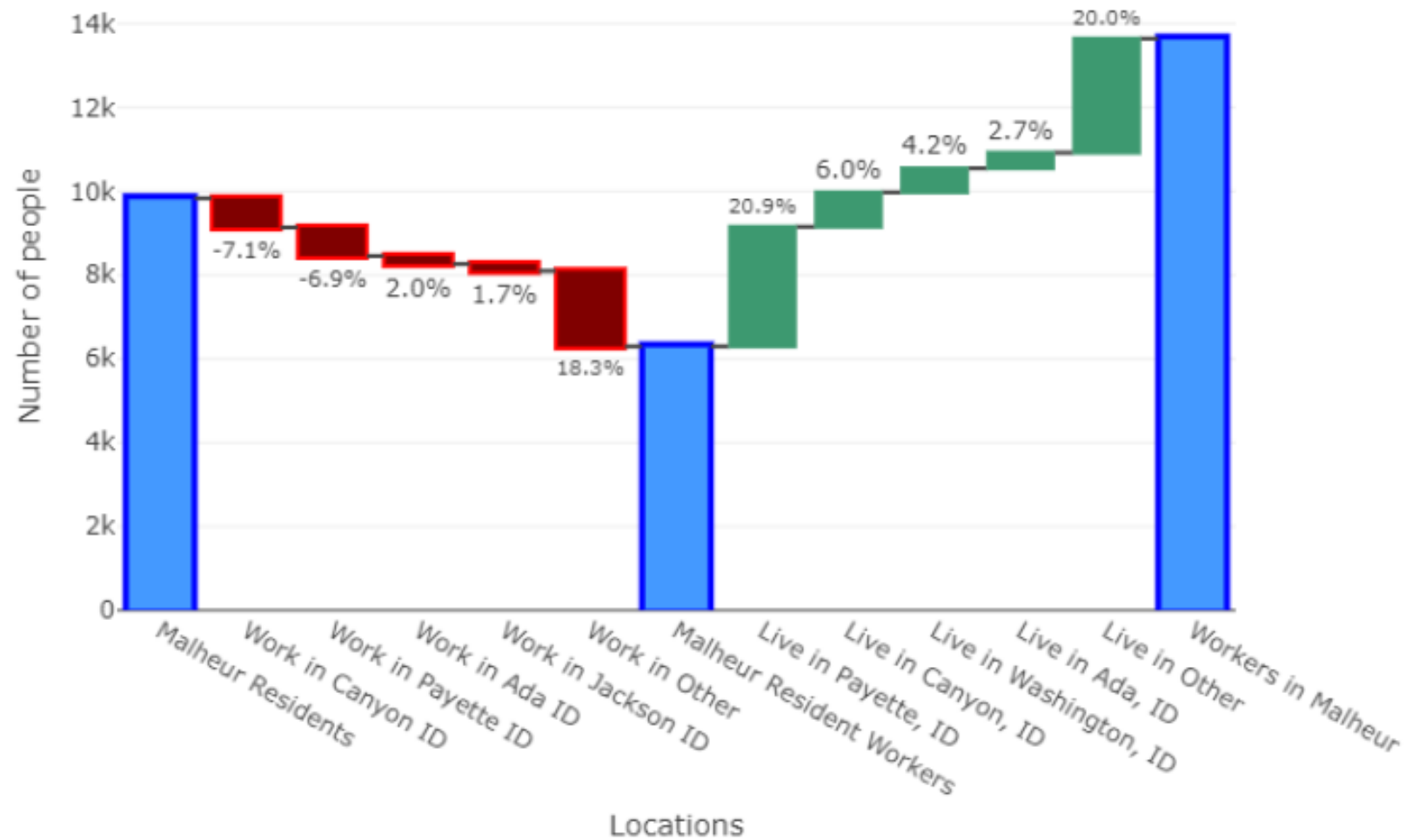
# Eastern Oregon Border Region

## - State of the Region -

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- The property tax base, population, and residential development in the Border Region are stagnant while neighboring Idaho booms.
- The Border Region 'imports' a disproportionate majority of its workers.
- Snake River Correctional Institution, Oregon's largest prison, is located in the Border Region and was the largest state general funded public works project in state history.
- About 75% of SRCI's employees live in Idaho. The numbers are similarly astonishing in the local community college and Ontario school district.
- This dynamic is economically and socially disastrous.

# Worker Flow: Malheur County



# HB 2026 B

## - Highlights -

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- Gives residents of Malheur County a boost in applying for public employment in the region.
- Applicable only in the Border Region.
- Does not supplant qualification and merit-based hiring.
- Compliant with applicable law.

# HB 2026 B

## - Justification -

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- The economic poverty in the Border Region is intertwined with social poverty, largely attributable to the imported workforce.
- Far too many good paying, taxpayer funded workers live in Idaho and do not meaningfully participate in the Border Region's financial or social stability.
- Raising a community out of economic stagnancy cannot be achieved only by creating jobs. Harvard economist Raj Chetty's Opportunity Atlas' findings support this – there is no association between job growth and economic mobility for poor residents of the affected areas.
- When the community's residents do not fill the jobs, such job growth often results in exacerbation of poverty and community decline.
- The bottom line: The Border Region is a good place to live and work and the Border Board needs help in making this a priority.

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## - Call to Action -

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- The Eastern Oregon Border Region along the Idaho border has strong potential.
- The different laws, regulations, and perceptions of Oregon and Idaho have resulted in stagnancy in the Border Region while our Idaho neighbors thrive.
- A public employee resident hiring preference will help raise up the Border Region and its residents, as well as attract new residents.
- HB 2026 complements the many other programs of the Border Board.