



March 24, 2021

State of Oregon Legislature  
Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem OR 97301

Re: *Support of House Bill 3173*

Dear Committee Members:

The Crook County Fair Board urges your support for House Bill 3173 to continue funding for the Oregon State Lottery allocated to County Fairs. In the past year, our county fairgrounds and the state fair stepped up when our communities needed them the most. Through the global pandemic, wildfire relief efforts, and now vaccination efforts, our fairgrounds were transformed overnight into testing centers, makeshift hospitals, shelter for thousands of people and animals, and now, mass vaccination clinics.

Meanwhile, our fairs, youth education events, cultural festivals, trade shows and expositions, equestrian events, craft & hobby shows, consumer shows, non-profit, fundraisers, and community social events were almost all cancelled. This left counties and their fairgrounds financially strapped and ineligible for most federal COVID relief funding.

HB 3173 will eliminate an old funding cap put in place years ago and provide an additional investment of approximately \$165,000 per county per year. The bill also funds a much-needed capital infrastructure study so that we can make sure fairgrounds are ready for events and more importantly, emergency disaster response.

We encourage you to continue your commitment to County Fairgrounds by eliminating the funding cap and funding the capital needs infrastructure study so that we can make sure fairgrounds are ready for the future.

Sincerely,

Gail Merritt  
Chairperson Crook County Fair Board