

To Chairman Witt and Committee,

I am writing to you in support of House Bill 3173.

I am a horse trainer and a member of the horse community. After the wildfires this last summer, it has been quite apparent that the need for safe refuge during a natural disaster is crucial for us equestrians. The fairgrounds did exactly that for many of my fellow equine friends and acquaintances during the fires in September.

As a horse barn owner and someone who has been in the industry for over 30 years, I have seen the need to keep places like the fairgrounds well-funded and maintained, however over the past few decades, these places are falling into disrepair and they have no funding to keep their buildings safe and up to code. I know the general public may think of the fairgrounds only during fair season, but really these facilities play a much bigger and more important role than most people realize. I've seen the fairgrounds come to the table during their communities' time of need, they've been a safe haven for both animals and people during the wildfires, provided shelter during the Covid pandemic, and been called upon when no one else is there. I've seen firsthand that these fairgrounds could be the very center of command during a natural disaster if they were funded and maintained properly.

Please lift 1.53 million dollar cap that limits the lottery funds to support the fairgrounds so that they can continue to be a resource to their community. I would also like to see other funding established towards supporting these fairground facilities so they can become not only a resource for their community during a natural disaster, but a place that can be utilized throughout all seasons.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Kim Larson-Daiker of Sunstone Sport Horses