



Good Afternoon,

My testimony, offered in support of HB 3137, is written on behalf of the Umatilla County Fair and Fair Board. I appreciate your willingness to hear us out.

Supporting House Bill 3173 will show Oregonians that our state believes in the strength of county fairs and the opportunities that we provide and most importantly, that our government recognizes the importance of our influence on our youth. We ask that you support this bill to help us improve and expand what we are able to provide for our communities.

Additional funding from the state would further enable us to employ more service groups, in addition to:

- The Rotary Club who take our tickets at the gates and the Boy Scouts who provide garbage services during fair.
- The Elks Lodge who runs the logistics at our gates and who have ran our parking program for many years in the past.
- The High School Band Boosters who handle our recycling and the local Lions and Hospice groups who return to the fair annually to sell concessions as their major fundraiser, in special mobile units that were purchased specifically for them, by the fairgrounds

An increase in funding would allow us to honor more of the numerous discount requests that we receive each year. Here are a few discounts that we are currently able to offer:

- 4-H and FFA exhibitor SEASON passes are offered at the same cost a single day, adult admission ticket.
- Booth fee discounts for non-profit vendors whose annual fair participation serves as a way for them to gain exposure and support from people or organizations who attend the fair.
- Discounted gate admission for assisted living residents and their personal attendants and group rates for complete care facility residents and staff.
- Free admission for special education programs and admission discounts for summer reading program participants through local libraries.
- Donation certificates for free fair admission and concert tickets for over 20 fund-raising auctions/events throughout the year.

We need additional dollars to expand these programs, to entice sponsors and to support what the fair means to all of those who attend. The effects that fairs have on our communities are apparent statewide.

Here are some examples of what we have been able to do in recent years, because of our state funding:

- Added an Ag Science exhibition for kids which offers a hands-on interactive Ag experience for young children.
- Expanding our Fun at the Fair Day Camp program which provides an educational, "behind the scenes" fair experience for children from 1st through 5th grade. These kids are often the younger siblings of our 4-H and FFA exhibitors who will remember their time at the fair and may be able to give back in some way as adults.
- In 2019 we were able to contract more secondary family entertainers than we ever have in previous years, to encourage more families to come to the fair.
- In 2019, collected enough specialty sponsorship dollars to offer free admission for children 12 and under. We did this to help lower income and large families to attend the fair. In-turn we saw an increase in ancillary income from the carnival, food booths and other attractions.

Aside from the long-term impact of increased funding, the short-term impacts are very important this year because of the 2020 COVID cancellations. Most of our sponsors have experienced lost revenue as well.

The Umatilla County Fair is unique in that we do not own our fairgrounds and our fairgrounds is newly constructed. However, we do pay the City of Hermiston annually as part of our lease agreement and we do partner with them to fund capital improvements on the fairgrounds which benefit all of the other events held year-round.

It really does come full circle and the funds are far reaching. Far beyond the points that I am able to make in this testimony.

With my most sincere appreciation of your consideration and support,

Angie McNalley | Umatilla County Fair Manager