



Representative Bobby Levy

Serving Umatilla, Union & Wallowa Counties

Dear Co-Chairs Girod and Holvey and members of the committee, my name is Bobby Levy and I represent House District 58.

My district houses two integrally important establishments for higher education, Blue Mountain Community College in Pendleton and Eastern Oregon University in La Grande. Both have submitted projects funded by SB5505 and both are vital to bringing equality of education to rural Oregon.

Eastern Oregon University is the champion of the east. It is the only public University east of Highway 97 (not including OIT, which sits right off of HWY 97). EOU remains a staple for our community, because it offers opportunities of higher education to students who are unable to travel or leave their family homes to go to school in Western Oregon. Inlow Hall, which is the original building on campus, is officially asking for bonds for Phase II of their renovation process. This project includes stabilizing and bracing the building from climate effects and updating the building in line with energy efficiency standards.

Blue Mountain Community College, however, is requesting an entirely new building in order to offer the "FARM II" program. It is no secret that my district is primarily an agriculture or natural resource-based economy. The Farm II project is the culmination of community efforts and buy-in from the Pendleton Round-Up, City of Pendleton, Umatilla County, InterMountain ESD and the Port of Umatilla that hopes to address regional workforce training and livestock and equine events that not only benefit the students of BMCC, but increase the skilled workforce in Eastern Oregon. The funding for this project was included in Governor Brown's proposed budget in 2019-2021 because she understands that a skilled workforce benefits all of Oregon, not just the local community.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony in support of SB5505.

Representative Bobby Levy, HD58