

Good Afternoon Co-Chairs & Vice Chairs –

The City of Echo has reached a tipping point with its infrastructure and is seeking assistance through the means of capital funds requests from the Oregon Legislature.

Being new to the job here in Echo, I have done a full analysis of our infrastructure specifically our waste water and potable water systems. The waste water system has been out of compliance with DEQ since 2007 and we are about ready to go out to bid for construction, however the approving funding agencies required us to raise our sewer rate to \$75 per/month for the next 40 years. Our income in Echo is low to middle and many are on a fixed amount each month. Our project cost is approximately \$2.8 million and we have received \$1.3 in grants since we took out the loans.

We are asking for funds to replace our loan of \$1.5 million so we can still do our project and bring our rates back down.

The potable water system has had no work done to it for over 30 years and though our delivery system is okay, the water sources need updated; treatment facility needs replaced; we have found an alternate backup source of water, but lack the funds to bring into town; we are way under in our storage capacity and need another water tower; according to our engineer there is some concern for fire flow in case of a major fire event. . The individual service connections to our residence are failing and many are unreadable and/ or leak.

We are asking for \$6.2 million in critical water system funds to get our system where it should be.

Because of the financial hardship the City finds itself in with the sewer loans from the approving agencies, we cannot afford to do anymore work without raising the rates even higher and therefore rendering the affordability for most residents to live in Echo impossible. Our average monthly utility rate for our services is \$126 per/month for a small town of 720 people.

We realize this is a huge ask and we are not alone in this situation, however we are trying everything we can to remedy the situation and have run up against a brick wall to afford any more loans.

Please consider Echo in you capital improvement fund allocations in the coming fiscal budget. We are in real need to update and could use your help.

Thank you