

HB 2948 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

Action Date: 04/04/23

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference.
(Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 7-0-0-0

Yeas: 7 - Conrad, Dexter, Evans, Grayber, Hieb, Lewis, Tran

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Beverly Schoonover, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 3/23, 4/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs the Department of Emergency Management to develop and implement infrastructure improvement grant program for fairgrounds designated as emergency evacuation sites. Appropriates \$20 million to the department for the program. Sunsets January 2, 2027. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Examples of how county fairgrounds were used in recent emergencies and disasters
- Examples of infrastructure improvements needed in fairgrounds
- How fairgrounds are currently funded

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Adds telecommunications improvements to approved grant expenditures.

BACKGROUND:

According to the Oregon Department of Emergency Management, in 2020 multiple wildfires burned over one million acres of land statewide. Approximately 500,000 people were under evacuation status, and more than 40,000 people had to evacuate their homes. While Oregon's fairgrounds have previously sheltered community members and livestock during emergencies, county and state fairgrounds provided lifesaving shelter to evacuees during the 2020 wildfire season.

Fairgrounds in Yamhill, Washington, Deschutes, Linn-Benton, Tillamook, Jackson, and Douglas counties and the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem became temporary shelters for wildfire evacuees, livestock, and other animals in 2020. Basic infrastructure needs like water, sewer and power are needed at evacuation shelters for the health and safety of evacuees, and to stop the spread of illness or other disease.

House Bill 2948 A appropriates \$20 million to the Department of Emergency Management to develop a grant program for water, fire, telecommunications, and sewer infrastructure improvements at fairgrounds designated as evacuation sites. The measure requires the department to develop a grantmaking process and requires grantees to submit annual progress reports.