



Support Senate Bill 451 & Fairgrounds Investments

In the past few years, our county fairgrounds and the state fair stepped up when our communities needed them the most. Through the global pandemic, wildfire relief efforts, and testing and vaccination efforts, our fairgrounds were transformed overnight into testing centers, makeshift hospitals, shelter for thousands of people and animals, and mass vaccination clinics.

Meanwhile, our fairs, youth education events, cultural festivals, trade shows and expositions, equestrian events, craft & hobby shows, consumer shows, non-profit fundraisers, and community social events were almost all cancelled in 2020. This left counties and their fairgrounds financially strapped, ineligible for most federal COVID relief funding, while aging infrastructure continued to deteriorate.

Our fairgrounds are an economic hub in our community. Each year:

- Fairgrounds host approximately 6 million people during annual fairs and over 17,000 local events, bringing business to local hotels, restaurants, retail establishments, and service providers.
- Over 600 non-profit groups used our fairgrounds to generate more than \$10 million in charitable donations. Fairgrounds hosted educational, cultural, agricultural, and economic events for all ages and continue to seek further inclusion of communities of color.
- Junior Livestock Auction receipts at fairs of over \$12 million go to fund educational scholarships for youth entering food production and agriculture education beyond high school.
- 10,000 volunteers dedicated over 200,000 hours of volunteer service at their local fairgrounds.
- Fairgrounds directly employed 479 workers with a payroll of over \$10 million

A recent economic study by Oregon State University estimated that fairgrounds generated an economic footprint of approximately \$52 million in output, \$28 million in value-added income, and 867 full- and part-time jobs.

SB 451 will eliminate an old funding cap put in place years ago and provide an additional investment of approximately \$150,000 per county per year.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

- JL Wilson, Public Affairs Counsel – jlwilson@pacounsel.com / 503-569-8054
- Patrick Sieng, Oregon Fairs Association – patrick@oregonfairs.org / 503-558-5815