

Submitter: Paul Anderes
On Behalf Of: Union County and EOCA
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue
Measure: SB451

Chair Meek, Vice Chair Boquist and members of the committee.

I am Union County Commissioner Paul Anderes I also serve as the Chair of Eastern Oregon Counties Association, EOCA represents 14 Counties East of the Cascades. Prior to being elected County Commissioner I was an Agriculture teacher and FFA Advisor of 32 years, 23 of those years at La Grande High School in Union County. In all of those roles mentioned, I am in support of SB541.

I would like to Thank Senator Bonham for sponsoring this important legislation. Union County Fairgrounds hosts a number of events other than the Union County Fair in August. (more than 23 distinct events) Our Fairgrounds is so much more than one-week in the summer featuring youth livestock, funnel cakes and carnival rides that over 18,000 people attended in 2022. When our area had an early and severe COVID outbreak in June of 2020, Union County Fairgrounds was the site of our mass testing event.

Our Fairgrounds is a go-to space for community events all year long.

The events have included:

Eastern Oregon Beer Fest

Celebrate La Grande

Grande Ronde Hospital Employee Appreciation Day

Eastern Oregon Music festival

Eastern Oregon Celtic Festival

Horse shows

Eastern Oregon University student groups host socials and dances

RV Camping spaces

Peewee livestock showmanship (Along with Over the hill Livestock showmanship)

Mutton Busting

Boarding livestock displaced by the 2020 wildfires in Western Oregon

Solar Power conference

Youth educational presentations

Historical society meetings

Community Fundraisers

Teen Dances

Talent Shows

Grande Ronde Hospital Foundation Summer Event

Holiday Bazaars

Truck shows

Oktoberfest

Youth Arts events

Motorcycle Rallies

Hosting Wildland fire camps

As you can see it serves our community year-round.

As commissioners we have increased funding in our budgets and through Federal COVID Relief money. These amount to band aids given the continuous cost increases and a cap on lottery proceeds supporting Fairgrounds.

We need support from the State of Oregon to continue this vital economic driver for our Counties.

Thank you,

Paul Anderes Union County Commissioner

Chair Eastern Oregon Counties Association

EOCA represents 14 eastern and central Oregon counties, comprising a significant majority of the land within the state's borders. Our constituents face unique challenges due the diverse and dramatic geography of the counties we represent. Together, our respective commissioners work collaboratively to advocate on behalf of those who live, learn, and work in Eastern Oregon. We aim to shape policies that recognize the needs of our region of the state and challenges we face