

March 30, 2023

Chair Helm & Members of the
House Agriculture, Land Use and Water Committee
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Helm and Members of the Committee:

SDAO has approximately 950 members representing about 32 different types of districts including fire, parks and recreation, library, water, sewer, irrigation, and vector control to name a few. SDAO would like to express its support for the amendment to HB 3349 and would like to thank Representative Owens for his leadership on this topic and sponsorship of this bill.

To provide the committee some context, more than 350 of our members have annual budgets of less than \$100,000 and more than 250 additional districts have annual budgets of less than \$500,000. I share this because our membership has very little money to invest in the pursuit of federal or state grants.

HB 3349 would enable our association to share funding opportunities with our members in a manner that we have not been able to do in the past. SDAO has a limited budget, and this is a service we would love to provide to our members, but we simply do not have the capacity or resources to undertake this effort. We would ask the committee that recipients of these funds be permitted to contract this service out, simply because our association's limited capacity.

However, we believe that HB 3349 addresses only one part of the challenge our members are facing. Federal grants oftentimes come with a huge amount of paperwork. As mentioned earlier, our membership lacks the capacity to not only identify funding opportunities, but they also lack the resources, experience, and technical skills to apply for, administer and meet reporting requirements that come with federal grant funds. SDAO believes that the state should also invest in capacity building for local governments across the state to assist them in grant writing, administration, and reporting.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



Mark J. Landauer
Government Relations
Special Districts Association of Oregon

