

Submitter: Sherri Hironaka

On Behalf
Of:

Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management, General
Government, and Veterans

Measure: HB2410

I was born in Ontario and raised in Malheur County. After living most of my adult life away, I decided in 1999 to move back and make Ontario my home. I love this community and am proud to be just one of a small army of community volunteers who work in various capacities to make this a good community in which to work, raise a family, and retire. I do not want the image of Ontario to be marijuana, crime, homelessness and poverty. To change this perception, we need to attract and keep like-minded citizens. We do that by offering more and better amenities. The Rec District is a vital component in that scenario. Others will certainly address the economic benefits, but I want to address it thru the lens of opportunity. People of all ages, but especially, young people who live in rural and remote areas are afforded less opportunity compared to those in urban areas. A pool will provide a child the opportunity for swimming lessons from a certified instructor, reducing the chance of drowning; the opportunity to form and participate in a swim team that can host regional and state meets. Those opportunities become chances to work as lifeguard, to receive athletic scholarships to college, and to promote healthy lifestyles. These opportunities are obvious but what about low impact physical therapy, a safe place for senior to exercise safely and to have important social contact or even a place for families to beat the oppressive summer heat? A viable rec center would give employers the opportunity for better recruitment and retention. A thriving community will take away reasons for families to move to the Idaho side of the Snake River. I see unlimited opportunities for quality collaboration with the Boys and Girls Club, the Community Library, the Senior Center, schools, including TVCC. This includes recreational, educational, therapeutic and social opportunities. Please take this into consideration and move this bill forward. Ontario needs, and deserves, these opportunities. Thank you!