

Submitter: Dawn Mills  
On Behalf Of: Riddle Roots Community Projects  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means  
Measure: SB5506

Dear Ways and Means Committee,

Welcome to Riddle! If you were riding with me today you would have gone into town over the railroad system that came in the late 1800s, bringing people and progress to a magnificent valley. Those tracks were integral during the depression as the local prune industry shipped boxes back east, saving family and farms who longed to stay here. At any edge of our quaint town, I'd mention the tall timbers on the surrounding mountains. Riddle area trees, along with others around our state, keep 5 lumber mills producing building materials for the entire U.S., as well as some finished product export. I'd point to 4 of those mills and give you a bit of history on the owners. Those owners are the second generation in their family to continue on the heels of long-ago community members who believed in making this a place for families to have a job, grow up in, and grow old in, enjoying the little city each step of the way. On this drive we'd look over and discuss Nickel Mountain and its former mining companies that also supplied blue collar jobs and brought some more fame to the area. Those mining positions have changed hands into the current Riddle company that now produces sand performance products for our country and others.

As we move down the short Main Street, I'd share a story for each building, the folks that are there now and those known from before. Out in our country distance there are boundless stories to be told of the people and places who grew up under a very prosperous time. You see, I was born in Riddle, Oregon and have maintained a residence here all of my life. There was a point I had to be in other places part-time, but Riddle was home base. 11 of my family members were living right here when I was born. Throughout my days so far, 20 more Riddle relatives have been added, of course saying our good-byes to some along the way. I plan to be buried on the Riddle Pioneer Cemetery hillside, amongst my family and friends. So you see, my roots are deep, and I could not be prouder to be a part of the Riddle Roots Community Projects and its vision to provide the Riddle Activity Center (RAC) to all of our Southern Douglas County communities.

Your support of our project is greatly desired. Our area needs a boost. Timber and mining have hit hard times over the years and supportive families have left in search of places that have more to offer. We want to provide that "more" right here in our own backyard. What a thing to be able to do! Children can walk across the street to the RAC after school to learn, play and connect to community. STEM programs can be offered to challenge and DIY workshops provided to young and old. All the while encouraging growth and vision for each individual to take with them either in their

future work, to their own South Douglas County town or just down the street to their neighbor. We can use this facility to reach out to those needing services from programs that have nowhere here to provide them currently. It's a gathering safe place for healthy activities and even a shelter in a disaster. Our rural society needs this facility and I ask for your funding, please. Join us and back this RAC project that is a benefit to all. Welcome to Riddle!

Most Sincerely,  
Mrs. Dawn Mills