

February 15, 2024

Joint Ways and Means Committee Co-Chair Elizabeth Steiner  
Joint Ways and Means Committee Co-Chair Tawna Sanchez  
Legislative Fiscal Office  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: McKenzie River Discovery Center Request for Scope Change to 2022 SB5701

Dear Committee Chairs, and Capital Construction Sub Committee Members,

In 2022 the MRDC was truly grateful to receive authorization of \$3 million from the Oregon Legislature to build a new building that would house the Discovery Center exhibits. As you are all aware, since then inflation and building costs have skyrocketed. The new costs were beyond reasonable. Our Board of Directors had to have a serious discussion as to move forward with the original plan or to pivot and look to a different solution that would still accomplish our goal and deliver education and economic development for the fire impacted McKenzie River Valley. We determined that using the existing historical buildings was a viable and maybe even a better option.

Pivoting to this new and better option on building requires us to completely remodel the three existing buildings and build back at least one building that we lost in the 2020 Fire.

I am asking for your support to the scope change request in HB5201. This change represents the shift in construction from using the \$3 million to build a “new” building to allow us to use the funds for remodel of existing buildings and construction of a fire loss building. The scope of the buildings has changed with this project, but the need and the excitement for the Discovery Center has not changed!

Thank you for your consideration of this change and for all you do to make Oregon the best place to live,

Amanda Jones  
MRDC Board Member  
Locals helping Locals  
Oregon Solutions Recovery  
McKenzie Valley Long Term Recovery Group