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Legislative Leaders and Budgeting Officials:

The purpose of my addressing you in this letter is to express the full support of my office for the Malheur County Circuit Court's efforts in obtaining a new courthouse for Malheur County. Several areas of urgent need involve the following:

Fully-Functioning Courtrooms:

As currently situated, our severely outdated courthouse only has one fully-functional courtroom. Our second courtroom lacks the space to accommodate a jury, or even a normal crowd of potential spectators beyond the required parties. The third room is barely the size of a normal bedroom and is only used for brief hearings, most of which involve appearance by video.

Not having a fully functioning courtroom for each elected judge (and ideally, one for future growth based on the well-documented need for another judge in Malheur County), the handling of our ever-growing docket becomes very inefficient. This results in justice being delayed for all who seek to have their disputes decided before a judge and jury, particularly those charged with criminal offenses. The issue of their liberty being taken away deserves to be decided in a timely manner, and having jury facilities for each elected judge would allow us to accommodate twice to three times (third judge) the final resolutions that our current facility allows in the same amount of time.

Attorney/Criminal Defense Services


Over the years, I have received requests and complaints regarding the lack of an available attorney conference room for meeting with clients and their families. Currently, the courthouse has two small meeting rooms that can accommodate an attorney and one client, but that is all. A new facility with a dedicated attorney conference room would allow for an environment more conducive to explaining and understanding complex legal issues while feeling supported by an investigative team or loved ones. The current set-up can leave a defendant feeling very alone in their perilous legal situation.

I have also been confronted about the location and inadequate resources included in our publicly accessible law library. In our current courthouse, it is located on a different floor than the court and on the opposite side of the facility. No defendant or member of the public would be able to find it without a guide. Once there, it is dimly lit and furnished with long-outdated materials. Having a modern, updated law library on the same level as the court that it is supposed to be a resource for would be a game-changer for pro-se litigants, including criminal defendants.

As the elected District Attorney for Malheur County, I also agree with all of Judge Hung's described needs and issues. We outgrew this current facility long ago, and at this time our services to the public are being hindered.

Please approve the ask for funds to plan for and design a new courthouse facility in Malheur County.

Thank you.



David M. Goldthorpe
Malheur County District Attorney