

LANE COUNTY FAIR SUPPORTS HB 2304

To whom it may concern,

During the past few years, the Lane County Fairgrounds and many other Fairgrounds around the state of Oregon have stepped up when our communities needed them the most. Through the global pandemic, wildfire relief efforts, testing and vaccination efforts, flooding events and extreme weather events, our fairgrounds were transformed into testing centers, shelter for people and animals, multi-agency resource centers, and mass vaccination clinics. Many fairgrounds including ours are centrally located in a city and services a significant population of people as a location to respond to emergencies or disasters. We are proud to be able to say we have responded to the public and community needs not only during the pandemic but in multiple natural disasters during the last few years' fire and flooding seasons. We have provided space and resources for Covid-19 testing events, Covid-19 vaccination events, shelter for unhoused individuals, emergency shelter for animals displaced by wildfires, Red Cross shelters, cool air shelters, FEMA resource center, Multi Agency Resource Center, fire battalion resource center and other city/county responses to extreme events.

In addition to emergency response centers, our fairgrounds are a year-round economic hub in our community. A recent Market Analysis showed our economic impact each year is over \$35 million to our community and businesses, just in Lane County. Our fairgrounds host educational, cultural, agricultural and economic events for all ages and demographics. We provide a safe space and venue for those businesses, organizations, youth groups, non-profits to gather for entertainment or business and hope to be able to do so for years into the future.

Our facilities, much like most of the county fairs across the state, are in dire need of deferred maintenance and improvements. Many facilities are not up to the current code, many are not ADA friendly or compliant and most were not built with the intent of providing emergency shelter or housing, which unfortunately will continue to be a need as we look to the future.

HB2304 will eliminate an old funding cap put in place years ago and fully fund the 1% of lottery funds to county fairs. We also ask for the support of additional capital improvement funds to ensure they can continue as resilience/disaster response, economic, social, cultural and educational hubs in our communities. Please help us continue to be the resource that everyone needs us to be.
VOTE YES on HB2304.

Thank you for your support,

Corey Buller

Lane County Fair Manager

