



Josephine County Fairgrounds & Event Center  
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Written support for HB 2304

March 5, 2025

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to you today to show my strong support for HB 2304. I apologize for the technical difficulties that were experienced during my remote testimony today. I have and I have been the Director of the Josephine County Fairgrounds in Grants Pass for over 6 years. The issues that I was asked to resolve when I was first hired and I'm still trying to resolve today were 1) find a way to stabilize funding and 2) build back our Fairgrounds to be a county resource instead of liability and HB 2304 will help with both goals.

The county purchased the property which is still known today as our Fairgrounds in 1927 with most of the infrastructure and buildings built between the 1940s and the early 1960s. That's just shy of 100 years of service to our community from this location with our infrastructure over 60 years old. Like everyone else, our County has had financial struggles, and the Fairgrounds was removed from the general fund years ago leading to deferred maintenance and the struggle to stay open. While some Fairgrounds have found funding through transient taxes or local tax districts, we have not. The only financial support we receive is from the State, which is about \$53,000 per year. To put it into perspective, my water bill alone last year was \$117,000.

A stable and healthy Fairgrounds is an absolute year round economic boost to a local economy. Year round we create spaces for events, activities and education, bringing business to hotels, restaurants and our local businesses. We provide low barrier opportunity and support for the smallest of businesses by creating space and opportunities for them to pursue their ambitions and dreams. All someone needs to launch their business from a Fair is a table, chair and an idea.

Additionally, we create educational opportunities for youth and adults alike on a wide variety of topics from health, technology and agriculture. But what's talked about the most is we support our community in times of need, whether through fire evacuation, weather emergencies like flooding and even pandemics. In crisis, people come to the fairgrounds looking for shelter, answers, safety and the basic necessities.

Removing the cap on the 1% of lottery funds designated for the fairgrounds alone will stabilize my fairgrounds and allow us 100 years from now to still be here to inspire, educate and support our community.

Sincerely,

Tamra Martin, Director  
Josephine County Fairgrounds and Event Center