



Klamath County Event Center
3531 S. 6th Street
Klamath Falls, OR 97603
541-883-3796

March 6, 2025

RE: HB 2304 SUPPORT TESTIMONY

House Committee on Economic Development and Small Business, and Trade

My name is Derrick Rowley, Director for the Klamath County Event Center and Fair. I have been associated with this property for over 18 years. I have watched our property move from merely a “fairgrounds property” to that of a full functioning “event center”, hosting many, many types and styles of events throughout the year. The needs associated with running this facility are always challenging – cost of maintenance, employing quality staff, and updating current buildings.

The success of House and Senate bills that support our county fairs and fairgrounds is so important to the success of our local county, as well as our neighbors across Oregon. No doubt, you have heard many voices with regard to support for these Bills. We echo the sentiments of others in our industry. Alone, the cost to bring a quality Fair to our county is becoming monumental and we are continually looking for proper funding, partners and the means of investment to support this great event. We can proudly say that we are one of the largest events in our county bringing in over 48,000 visitors to this annual event. Increased funding would support this event and assist us in the continuation of a quality entertainment venue for our community – supporting tourism along the way.

As stated above, maintenance of our facility is a great challenge within our budget constraints, especially when considering that we are not County General Fund supported. We, as an independently funded property, support over 400 events each year and with this use, upkeep of our buildings and infrastructure is financially difficult to support without reliable funding sources. It is noteworthy to say that our facilities are used not only for rentals and our annual fair, but that of an increasingly necessary use – that of an evacuation center in the instance of emergencies. The passage of these bills can assist us greatly in this endeavor, while increasing economic benefits and opportunities that we all strive to obtain for our communities.

Sincerely,

Derrick J. Rowley

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Klamath County Event Center Director

Gregg C. Sherrill

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Klamath County Fair Board Chair