

March 6, 2025

Senate Natural Resources and Wildfire Committee  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301



Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Oregon Building Officials Association (OBOA) we have significant concerns about SB 788. The OBOA represents more than 1,000 building officials and personnel throughout the state. Its members include a wide range of building officials, both in large, metropolitan cities and counties, as well as small, rural jurisdictions, including third-party agencies.

The OBOA's concerns center around allowing events in agricultural buildings that do not comply with fire and life safety building code requirements to ensure the safety of occupants inside these structures. Agricultural buildings are exempt from the Oregon Structural Specialty Code requirements through ORS 455.315 as they are intended to be used for agricultural purposes, with few people occupying the facilities. If you allow large numbers of people into a structure, it increases the hazard probability of the structure and the building occupants. The building code addresses these hazards and provides a minimum safety threshold for the occupants. Potential overcrowding, lack of egress, and inappropriate structural integrity are threats to the occupants and pose potential life-threatening circumstances.

OBOA understands and appreciates the economic impacts this bill could have for farmers, and we seek to find a balance between the economic impacts and the potential safety risks associated with this bill. OBOA recommends and is committed to working together to find a better balance between the economic benefits and life-safety for the uses allowed in SB 788.

Sincerely,

Matthew Rozzell  
Legislative Chair- Oregon Building Officials Association