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March 11, 2025

The Honorable Chair, Vice Chairs, and Members
House Committee on Revenue
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem Oregon 97301

Re: House Bill 3518 – County Assessment Function Funding Assistance (CAFFA)

Dear Chair Nathanson, Vice Chairs Reschke and Walters, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide support for HB 3518.

The ongoing decline in funding provided by the CAFFA grant for essential County Assessment and Tax functions is directly affecting the Benton County General Fund, as well as negatively impacting the Assessment Department's ability to complete state-mandated functions and responsibilities.

The CAFFA grant funding originally provided approximately 36 % of funding for Assessment and Tax functions across the state, but funding has declined significantly over time. In Benton County, CAFFA funding has decreased from 35% to approximately 9% of the overall Assessment budgeted expenses, with the remaining funding coming from the County's General Fund. This decline continues to place pressure on our General Fund and diverts funds from other essential General Fund services Benton County is required to provide. It also places financial strain on the Assessment Department and limits the department's ability to equitably value all properties within Benton County and complete the necessary work to add the appropriate values to the tax roll.

If HB 3518 is passed, funding will return to near the levels the legislature initially supported when the CAFFA grant was established and would provide sustainable funding for Assessment and Tax functions across Oregon. Without this funding, property tax revenues will continue to decline due to the ongoing strain to support the needed funding for assessment functions.

The Benton County Board of County Commissioners supports the passage of HB 3518, and we strongly urge you to support its passage.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

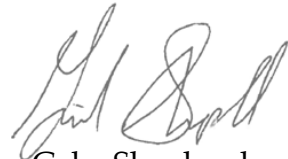
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