

Submitter: Jango McCormick

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3870

I would like to convey my support for the funding of the Mosier Center. I grew up in Mosier, and left for college shortly after the oil train derailed in 2016. I have recently come back to my town after several years as a wildland firefighter in order to work on my family's farm and winery. Mosier has changed dramatically since I was young: it is far busier, it has a more diverse economy, and it seems to be constantly under the threat of wildfire. Its needs have grown much faster than its infrastructure, despite the efforts of an active, politically engaged community.

I see the proposed Mosier center as a necessary upgrade to the public infrastructure in our town. Small, rural towns are often left behind in their development, but Mosier is no longer just a remote agricultural town. It is an active community with a disproportionately large role in its region's tourism and community service. We host many visitors and we help many people from the surrounding area with our community efforts, most notably in the form of volunteer firefighting. Mosier is one of those towns that compensates for a lack of capacity elsewhere with energy and charity, despite the fact that its public infrastructure remains underdeveloped. The additional capacity promised by the proposed center is an overdue necessity, especially in a quickly changing region.

The upgraded facilities for our firefighters seems obviously useful in a time when wildfires are becoming more and more common, and are threatening more homes and farms. We rely on the work of our local volunteers, who have sacrificed their equipment, time, and safety for the good of the community (notably last summer, when they put out the remaining hotspot on the Gorge Twin Tunnels trail, opening up bicycle traffic to our town). This facility is overdue for the people who hazard their health for the common good every season.

The other portion of this project that would be a boon to our community and the surrounding area is the proposed food pantry and emergency shelter. On my family's farm, we're putting more and more of our efforts into food preservation and accessibility for the benefit of our regional supply chain, which has proved itself to be unstable. Public resources should be ahead of, not behind, private enterprise in this respect. I hope that this funding will prepare our town and the surrounding rural area for a greater degree of self-sufficiency with regard to food preparation, preservation, and distribution in the event of future disruptions to the food supply chain.

A small group of citizens in Mosier have put an astounding level of effort into this

project over the course of the past several years, acquiring the great majority of the necessary funding. The return on investment in terms of community welfare, economic development, and risk mitigation will be disproportionate to the small amount requested here. Failing to fund this project would be a missed opportunity on the part of the elected officials tasked with representing the common good and best interests of Oregonians.

Jango McCormick