



OFA Appreciative of SB 5505 Oregon State Fair & Exposition Center \$4.9 million bond for Regional Emergency Center

The Oregon Fairs Association is very appreciative of the \$4.9 million bond allocation to the Oregon State Fair & Exposition Center (OSFEC) for the formation of a Regional Emergency Center at the fairgrounds.

It is long overdue that OSFEC be leveraged and utilized as a key emergency management asset for the region and the state.

To prepare for future emergency needs, OSFEC is seeking improvements identified in consultation with key partners including the Oregon National Guard, Marion County Emergency Management, Salem Health, the City of Salem, the American Red Cross, and others. The proposed capital included in this ask include:

- Emergency communications enhancements to align with state and local systems, including PA systems, public Wi-Fi, security, and IT infrastructure;
- A digital messaging system to support coordination between evacuation sites, staging areas, response personnel, and those in need;
- Replacement of dilapidated fencing and gates with secure, campus-wide safety infrastructure;
- Upgrades to drinking water access through modern bottle filling stations and water container systems; and
- Installation of air conditioning units in the Pavilion building to ensure safe and comfortable shelter conditions during extreme heat events or prolonged emergency occupancy.

With this investment, OSFEC will be better positioned to meet the needs of Oregonians during natural disasters, public health crises, and other emergency needs.

However, the \$4.9 million in bonds only provides a partial solution to the capital needs of OSFEC to ensure its viability as a complete Regional Emergency Center.

We continue to advocate for **HB 2304**, the Fairgrounds Revitalization Act, which would solve the issue completely with the following:

- Eliminate the arbitrary \$1.9 million annual funding cap established 20 years ago and instead fully fund county fairs with 1% of lottery funds;
- Share 10% of these lottery funds to provide ongoing support for the Oregon State Fair and Exposition Center; and
- Support the full \$20.171 million bonding need to OSFEC for full infrastructure improvement as a regional emergency and evacuee center.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

- JL Wilson, Public Affairs Counsel – jwilson@pacounsel.com / 503-569-8054
- Patrick Sieng, Oregon Fairs Association – patrick@oregonfairs.org / 503-558-5815