

Submitter: Rebecca Mathern
On Behalf Of: Osborn Aquatic Center
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On
Capital Construction
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5531

Dear Honorable Committee Members,

I write today to ask for support from the state legislature to fund the repairs needed for Osborn Aquatic Center in Corvallis. Last fall the city engineer found structural damage in beams that support the roof. The result was immediate closure. The pool has been closed since November with limited access to the outdoor pool. The effect on the community has been nothing short of devastating.

The only public swimming facility in Corvallis serves two high school swim teams, the Corvallis Aquatic Team, swim lessons for hundreds of children and adults each week, adaptive water therapy, open swim for the public, and much more. The use of community rooms at Osborn has also been affected, which means the loss of places to host health certifications such as first aid and CPR trainings, Boy and Girl Scouts meetings, ROTC trainings, and meetings for other community groups that rely on municipal space.

Osborn is one of only two long-course indoor facilities in the state of Oregon that can host large swim competitions (the other being in Tualatin) and without this access, swim competitions for swimmers across the state have suffered, including taxing other facilities, and water polo competitions have suffered without access to Osborn this past winter.

My spouse and I moved our family to Corvallis twelve years ago and the vast majority of their swimming lessons happened at Osborn. Both daughters also joined the swim team (Corvallis Aquatic Team) and one daughter swam for Corvallis High School. I use the pool for lap swim as it's a safe activity for an aging body. Besides work and school, it is the place in Corvallis where we spend the rest of our time; it's our COMMUNITY.

The loss of this pool has cost Corvallis so much- the loss of economic development provided by the thousands of swimmers and their families who stay overnight in Corvallis during swim meets, the delay in swim lessons for young children in the community who cannot travel to other towns to get lessons, and the number of children who choose not to consider joining the swim team because of the lack of practice facility. Not to mention the many elderly people in the community who use the pool as their main source for safe and healthy exercise.

I could go on and on about the need for repairing the pool but hopefully these examples help you see the amazing resource Osborn is for not only Corvallis but for the state of Oregon. I will gladly volunteer to serve on any committees that support the repairs; we just need financial support from the state to help kick-start the work.

Please reach out if you have any questions or would like to ask for volunteers on the repair efforts.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Mathern