



May 9, 2025

To: House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans
Oregon State Legislature

From: Deanna Palm, President and CEO of the Washington County Chamber of Commerce

Re: Support for Senate Bill 5531 – funding request for South Hillsboro Fire Station

Dear Co-Chairs Girod, and Nosse, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Washington County Chamber of Commerce, I write today in strong support of the City of Hillsboro's request for \$5 million in funding towards the development of the South Hillsboro (SoHi) Fire Station. This request represents a much-needed investment in our local public safety infrastructure that supports fire service for the 8,000 plus housing units in Oregon's largest master planned community.

Hillsboro is one of the fastest-growing communities in the state, and with that growth comes the urgent need for reliable and resilient emergency services. The SoHi Fire Station is a critical project that will improve emergency response times, support community recovery during disasters, and ensure public safety for thousands of families and businesses in the area.

This new 18,500 square foot essential facility will serve multiple functions—housing Hillsboro Fire & Rescue crews, operating as a Building Division Department Operations Center (DOC), and serving as a backup Emergency Operations Center. Designed with resiliency in mind, the station includes features such as a diesel generator, emergency water well, fuel island, and solar energy to ensure three weeks of sustained operations in the event of a major disaster. The facility also incorporates trauma-informed design and sustainability measures, further enhancing its long-term value to the region.

As an organization dedicated to strengthening the economic vitality of Washington County, we know that a thriving economy depends on public safety and preparedness. A \$5 million state contribution is a wise investment that supports not only the City of Hillsboro's emergency response needs but also bolsters the overall resiliency of our growing region.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Deanna Palm'.

Respectfully yours,
Deanna Palm