

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF FUNDING FOR REPAIR OF OSBORN AQUATIC CENTER,  
CORVALLIS, OR

Thank you for considering Corvallis' request for \$5 million in funding to repair the roof at Osborn Aquatic Center. The aquatic center is owned by the Corvallis School District and operated by the City of Corvallis. Much to the consternation of hundreds of swimmers, Osborn shut down suddenly in October 2024 because the City discovered severe corrosion in a portion of the facility roof not normally accessible or visible.

I took up lap swimming in 1979 when I was in college as a way to kick a strong cigarette habit. Ever since, I've been swimming laps at least three days a week (and for many years, 5-6 days a week) at whatever public pool is available to me. I've been swimming laps at Osborn since 1988. As I have lived in many places since I started swimming laps in 1979, I have noticed a common theme at all public pools, and Osborn is no different: The pool is an essential asset that provides a way for people of all ages and abilities to come together for a healthy, uplifting activity. Athletes who can no longer run or bike due to injury or age can still get aerobic exercise in the pool. Aerobic exercise is an important outlet for the increasing number of folks experiencing anxiety. Obese people fill water aerobics classes because it's the only exercise they can safely do. Children learn to swim and are thus less likely to drown and more likely to recreate safely on state waters. Kids with developmental limitations squeal with joy when allowed to splash in the water with friends.

As with every pool I've "belonged to," Osborn is extremely popular with senior citizens. Elders often gravitate towards swimming as a way to exercise in a low-impact way. For many of these seniors, the pool is the only place they visit where they can socialize. Other swimmers often provide emotional support when a spouse dies or a swimmer undergoes a major health challenge. There's a reason Medicare health insurance policies pay the cost of a pool membership: swimming reduces physical and mental health costs. I strongly urge you to provide the funding that will enable to get the Osborn Aquatic Center back to providing the essential services it has provided since the 1970's. Thank you for your time and attention.

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