

Submitter: Jeffrey Rose

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Capital Construction

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5546

Testimony to the Capital Construction Subcommittee of the Joint Ways and Means Committee - SB 5531

Submitted by Jeff Rose, High Desert Partnership

Chair Girod, Co-Chair Nosse, and Members of the Capital Construction Subcommittee:

My name is Jeff Rose and I am here today with High Desert Partnership (HDP), a nonprofit organization based in Harney County. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of HDP's Capital Construction request for the Eastern Oregon Collaboration Center.

Our collaborative approach has helped develop resilient, consensus-driven decisions—even on highly divisive topics. Our partnerships also extend well beyond Harney County. Between 20% and 47% of our partners come from other regions across Oregon, underscoring the statewide relevance and impact of our work. This center will serve as a regional hub for collaborative problem-solving, equipping rural communities across Oregon with the tools, training, and resources they need to address complex and pressing challenges.

Construction of the Eastern Oregon Collaborative Center will build upon HDP's proven track record of transcending conflicts related to divisive topics. The center will provide:

- A physical facility with meeting, office and works spaces,
- Staffing to manage operations
- Resources to support both existing and new collaborative initiatives
- A learning hub for collaboration strategies
- A base for collaborative partners, agencies and organizations working in Eastern Oregon.

The results of HDP's work to date speak for themselves: improved ecological resilience, strengthened interagency and cross-sector communication, economic development, and reduced litigation costs. We receive regular requests—from both public and private entities—for support in launching or enhancing collaborative efforts.

With 39 years of experience in natural resource management in Southeastern

Oregon, I've been involved in planning efforts at the local, state, and national levels. These have included work on public lands grazing, wildland fire, sage-grouse conservation, wilderness access, and wild horses and burros—issues that often bring together stakeholders with deeply divergent views. I've seen time and again that when collaborative processes are engaged, projects move from planning to implementation more efficiently, with far less litigation. That's a significant achievement, especially given the increasing polarization we see today.

In closing, the Eastern Oregon Collaboration Center represents both an expansion of our current work in Harney County and a launching point for new, community-driven solutions across rural Oregon. I respectfully urge your support for this important capital investment for Harney County and Oregon.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jeff Rose
High Desert Partnership