

Date:	February 10, 2026
To:	Chair Meek, Vice Chair Drazan, Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce and General Government
From:	Association of Oregon Counties Legislative Affairs Manager Justin Low
Subject:	Neutral – SB 1585

Thank you for the opportunity to submit neutral testimony on SB 1585. For the record, I am Justin Low, testifying on behalf of the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC).

Counties appreciate the intent behind SB 1585. The policy question raised by this bill, whether the state should calibrate local match requirements based on population and fiscal capacity, is an essential one. Smaller-populated counties often face disproportionate challenges in assembling the local match required to access state capital construction and infrastructure grants. Exploring a more flexible, population-based framework for match requirements is a conversation that is absolutely worth having in Oregon.

At the same time, counties share several concerns raised in submitted testimony from other local government partners. As drafted, SB 1585 would only establish flexible and reduced match requirements for incorporated cities with populations under 20,000. Counties, and other political subdivisions of the state, are not eligible for the reduced match rates proposed by this bill.

If the Legislature determines that reduced match requirements are appropriate policy for cities, based on population and fiscal capacity, then counties respectfully suggest that similar criteria be applied to counties and other forms of local government in the future. Creating preferential match treatment for one class of local government will unintentionally create inequities in access to state capital resources.

AOC appreciates the stated commitment by LOC representation to support the expansion of this policy to other political subdivisions, should it pass in 2026. Counties stand ready to work with legislators and local government partners to develop a comprehensive approach that supports small and rural communities in a future legislative session.

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Thank you for your consideration and for your continued partnership in strengthening Oregon's local infrastructure systems.

Sincerely,

Justin Low

AOC Legislative Affairs Manager