



# Written Testimony for SB 5701

## Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction

Submitted by Row River Valley Community Partnership, on behalf of the Row River Rural Fire Protection District

Chair and Members of the Committee,

In May 2024, voters in the Row River Valley approved the formation of a volunteer fire district to protect approximately 1,200 residents, 500 households, and an estimated 250,000 annual visitors in a high wildfire risk rural valley with a single ingress and egress route.

Since that vote, we have pursued funding to construct permanent fire stations. Today, emergency response operations in the Disston area are housed in a temporary facility on private land. This arrangement is not stable, not purpose built, and not sufficient for long term fire and EMT operations.

The Disston Station is a capital construction request that will:

- Provide a secure, code compliant facility for apparatus and lifesaving equipment.
- Improve response times in an area with limited coverage.
- Stabilize volunteer recruitment and retention by providing safe operational space.
- Strengthen statewide wildfire resilience in a watershed critical to Lane County.

This is a rural district that has taxed itself first. We are not requesting operating subsidy. We are requesting one time capital investment to establish durable public safety infrastructure.

A permanent station in Disston will move our district from temporary and vulnerable to stable and operationally reliable.

We respectfully request inclusion of the Disston Station within SB 5702 capital construction allocations.

Thank you for your time and your service to rural Oregon communities.

Respectfully,

Kathleen Istudor

Executive Director

Row River Valley Community Partnership