

Submitter: LeeAnn O'Neill
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Capital Construction
Measure, Appointment or SB5701
Topic:

Dear Hon. Capital Construction Subcommittee members-

I write on behalf of Warm Springs Community Action Team. We were awarded \$3.8M by the 2025 session in SB 5331, and are hard at work on our Commissary project, as a result of this funding. We are writing with a formal request to amend to Sec. 41 of SB 5331, the 2025 Xmas Tree bill. This amendment will say that the \$3.8M in Capital Construction funding for WSCAT's Commissary Project (currently included for 2027 Lottery Bond) would come from the 2026 Lottery Bond sale.

Simply put, earlier timing for our funding is vital for us to proceed with construction which is underway from prior phases of the project, saving hundreds of thousands in anticipated construction costs and/or stop/start or financing. As a 501(c)3 nonprofit serving the Warm Springs Reservation, WSCAT has explored obtaining a bridge loan to ensure our ongoing project can continue (while waiting for a Spring 2027 funding date)- and there are prohibitively steep costs connected to our nonprofit and reservation-based status. We want to utilize state funding as smoothly as possible, ensuring that the state's contribution is put to the best use and can more quickly lead to the economic benefits this project will bring. Changing the funding date to this Spring would save the community several hundred thousand dollars- a substantial cost for our small nonprofit (and money better spent on businesses for the Commissary, itself!).

We have been working with Hon. Rep Greg Smith (House District 57) to support and advocate for this amendment. Key CapCon committee members have been supporters of this project - thank you for your advocacy for needed community economic development in Warm Springs.

I write with Leah Guliasi, WSCAT Interim Executive Director, leah@wscat.org.

LeeAnn O'Neill
Two Spirit Health Equity Coalition Director
WSCAT