

JANEEN SOLLMAN
STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 15



OREGON STATE SENATE

February 14, 2026

TO: Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Capital Construction Subcommittee

RE: SB 5701 Letter of Support for Cornelius Community Center Capital Funding Request (2025–27 Biennium)

Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Representative Nosse, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to express my strong support for a \$5 million appropriation for the Cornelius Recreation and Community Center.

Cornelius is a vibrant community of nearly 15,000 residents, with more than 50% identifying as Latino. It is a culturally rich community with beautiful parks, growing small businesses, and strong ties to agriculture. But right now, Cornelius families are facing unprecedented uncertainty and fear. Parents are afraid to send their children to school. Families are reluctant to access essential services. Community members are isolating rather than gathering in public spaces.

In times of crisis, communities need safe spaces where families can come together, where children can thrive, and where neighbors can support one another. The Cornelius Recreation and Community Center will be that space.

The opportunity before us is unique and urgent. The Forest Grove School District has replaced the old Cornelius Elementary School, and the gym, cafeteria, and administrative space, only 30 years old, is ideal for reuse as a recreation and community center. The City is purchasing this building, and with your support, we can establish Cornelius's first Recreation and Community Center.

This center will serve as a safety net for the entire community, providing:

- **Emergency shelter** for extreme heat, cold, and other emergencies
- **Safe after-school programming** where children can learn and play in a secure environment
- **Youth and adult recreation**, including basketball, pickleball, and exercise classes
- **Senior activities** ensuring our most vulnerable residents remain connected
- **Arts programming and community events** that strengthen bonds and build resilience

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Beyond acquisition, the building requires renovation and updates to meet community needs. Local funding covers 51% of total project costs—\$2.1 million of the \$9.85 million total. State funding of \$5 million is needed to complete essential resiliency upgrades, space realignments, and basic renovation.

This is more than a building, it's a refuge. It's a place where families can feel safe, where children can be children, and where community members can access support without fear. Oregon is facing an economic and humanitarian crisis and we must send a clear message: we stand with all our residents, and we invest in spaces that protect and serve everyone.

This is a shovel-ready project with strong local investment and overwhelming community support from the Washington County Sheriff, Cornelius Fire Department, City Council, Forest Grove School District, and organizations like Centro Cultural de Washington County, Adelante Mujeres, Bienestar, and the Cornelius Boosters.

A \$5 million grant would send a powerful message that the State of Oregon is a strong partner in ensuring all Oregonians have access to safe spaces that build healthy, connected, and resilient communities.

Thank you for your consideration. I respectfully urge you to fund this appropriation and invest in Cornelius's safety and future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janeen Sollman".

Senator Janeen Sollman
Senate District 15