

MALHEUR COUNTY FAIR BOARD

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March 2, 2026

Re: HB1601

Dear Senator/Representatives

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 1601 and its provisions to increase lottery fund allocations that directly benefit county fairs across Oregon.

Oregon's county fairs are more than annual events—they are economic engines, educational hubs, and cultural cornerstones for communities throughout our state. From supporting 4-H and FFA youth programs to providing space for small businesses, local vendors, and agricultural showcases, fairs strengthen both rural and urban communities alike. Increasing lottery fund allocations through Senate Bill 1601 ensures these institutions have the stable funding necessary to continue serving Oregonians year-round.

Many county fairs operate on tight budgets while maintaining fairgrounds that are used far beyond fair season. These facilities host community events, emergency response staging areas, public safety operations, and local gatherings that keep communities connected. Increased lottery funding will help maintain infrastructure, improve safety standards, support youth development programs, and preserve the agricultural heritage that is foundational to Oregon's economy.

This investment is not simply about events—it is about sustaining local jobs, boosting tourism, encouraging small business growth, and ensuring equitable access to community resources in every region of the state. Raising allocations provides long-term stability and helps prevent deferred maintenance and financial strain.

Senate Bill 1601 represents a thoughtful and responsible use of lottery revenues—one that reflects Oregon's commitment to its communities, its agricultural roots, and its future generations. I respectfully urge you to support this bill and help secure the continued success of all county fairs across Oregon.

Thank you for your service and consideration.

Sincerely,
Malheur County Fair Board