



March 3, 2026

Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Capital Construction
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chairs Girod and Nosse, Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Washington County, I write in strong support of Senate Bill 1601-3 Section 24, which would remove the outdated funding cap on the County Fair Account and restore the full 1% lottery revenue allocation for Oregon's county fairgrounds.

The Washington County Fairgrounds serve as a vital year-round community hub. In addition to the annual Washington County Fair, the facility supports agricultural exhibitions, youth education programs, livestock shows, cultural festivals, community fundraisers, nonprofit events, and more. These activities attract thousands of visitors each year, strengthen our local economy, support small businesses, and provide affordable opportunities for community engagement and enrichment.

Fairgrounds also operate as critical infrastructure in emergency response. The open spaces, buildings, and utilities at fairgrounds across Oregon, including in Washington County, have served as staging areas during wildfires, emergency shelters, and logistical hubs for distributing supplies when natural disasters impact our communities.

Despite this important role, fairgrounds funding has remained virtually static for decades and was not indexed to inflation. As a result, facilities statewide are facing aging infrastructure, deferred maintenance, and capital needs that far exceed available resources.

By lifting the \$1.53 million cap, SB 1601-3 would allow fairground funding to grow with actual lottery revenue, resulting in meaningfully increased annual investment in each county. While allocations will vary by year, preliminary estimates indicate that many counties, including Washington County, could see significantly higher support that would help maintain critical infrastructure, improve accessibility, and expand community services.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your support for SB 1601-3 and investment in the long-term viability of Oregon's county fairgrounds.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Leah Perkins-Hagele, Venue & Fair Manager

Washington County Fair Complex, Home of the Washington County Fair