



Marion County

OREGON

April 2, 2013

451 Division St. NE
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Senator Arnie Roblan, Chair
Senate Committee on Rural Communities and Economic Development
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, Oregon 97301

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Dear Chair Roblan:

www.co.marion.or.us

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 7. I also would like to express my appreciation to Senator Peter Courtney and Senator Jackie Winters who have worked diligently for many years on state fair issues, and to our state representatives from Marion County who are also sponsors of this legislation.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Janet Carlson
Samuel Brentano
Patricia Milne

In addition to being Oregon's state capital, Salem is Marion County's largest city and our county seat. The Oregon State Fair is a longstanding tradition for not only Oregon, but also for Salem and Marion County. The state fair has been—and continues to be—an economic driver for our county. It promotes agriculture, which is Marion County's leading industry. Most importantly, it provides a venue for our 4-H and FFA youth who have participated in competitions at the Marion County Fair to go on to the state level. These are unforgettable experiences that promote leadership skills and positive youth development.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

John Lattimer

We in Marion County are particularly linked to the state fairgrounds, since the Marion County Agricultural Society first hosted the state fair on what was (then) the Marion County fairgrounds in the late 1800s. In the 21st century, we continue to hold the Marion County Fair on those same fairgrounds for four days encompassing the second weekend in July each year.

I am especially supportive of the following provisions in the -2 amendments to Senate Bill 7:

- Inclusion of an elected county official on the State Fair Council
- A commitment to conduct the state fair in the City of Salem
- Setting a period of three of any five consecutive years to ascertain the financial viability of state fair operations.

The latter provision will allow time for the Marion County Fair Board members to consider our own options, should the legislature deem it necessary to modify or terminate the lease agreement between the State of Oregon and the council for the fairgrounds.

Finally, it is important to note that the volunteers and staff involved with the Marion County Fair are committed to work with the new state fair council and staff so that we can continue the great tradition of state and county fairs in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Janet Carlson
Marion County Commissioner