



**Testimony of Jeroen Kok, Parks Manager, Clackamas County
In Support of SB 331
Senate Committee on Rural Communities and Economic Development
Thursday, February 17, 2013**

Chair Roblan and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of Clackamas County to voice our support of SB 331. My name is Jeroen Kok, and I am the Parks Manager for Clackamas County.

The Clackamas County Board of Commissioners supports SB 331 and has identified it as a key legislative priority for 2013. The bill would result in a more equitable distribution of existing recreation vehicle registration revenues. Current legislation has 65% of the revenue going to the Oregon Parks & Recreation Department, with 35% of the revenue distributed amongst County Park providers. It should be noted that the State provides approximately 51% of the overnight camping sites in the state, while the counties collectively provide approximately 49%. The proposed 50%/50% split would also help statewide county park providers' deal with unprecedented financial challenges.

The bill is important to Clackamas County for the following reasons:

- Current legislation sunsets in 2015 and will revert to 70% of the revenue going to OPRD and 30% going to counties, thereby worsening the disparity and financial strain.
- Despite significant cuts to staffing, operations, maintenance and capital budgets, the County Parks Department is still struggling financially.
- Based on the Deferred Maintenance Study completed by the Oregon Parks Association, Clackamas County has over 40 large deferred maintenance projects that need to be undertaken in the next few years in order to keep parks safe and usable. The total price tag is over \$4.8 million. Parks such as Barton, Metzler, Feyrer and Eagle Fern need critical infrastructure work such as: replacement restroom facilities, repaved roads and parking lots, updated potable water systems and safe and usable play equipment.
- There continues to be a high demand for quality park and recreation experiences and safe places for family to enjoy the outdoors, especially close to home. The proposed legislation will provide Clackamas County with an addition \$151,659 annually to help us to maintain our public parks – parks that attract visitors from throughout the County and the region.
- The additional funding will be used as match to leverage additional grants and partnerships so that we can stretch the value of each and every dollar for maximum benefit.

We strongly urge your support of SB 331 and thank you for considering our testimony.