

Columbia County



Board of Commissioners

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February 13, 2013

Senate Committee On Rural Communities and Economic Development

Senator Arnie Roblan, Chair

Senator Herman Baertschiger, Vice Chair

Senator Ginny Burdick, Member

Senator Betsy Close, Member

Senator Floyd Prozanski, Member

RE: SB 331 Amending RV licensing fee allocation methodology

Dear Chairperson Roblan, Members of the Committee:

Columbia County strongly endorses the passage of SB 331 which will amend the methodology by which Oregon recreational vehicle licensing fees are allocated between Oregon Parks and Recreation Department and Oregon county park agencies. Passage of this bill will help Columbia County's park agency bring our RV camping facilities up to competitive market standards and bring much needed tourism dollars to our rural community economies.

Columbia County along with all other Oregon counties currently receive 35% of the licensing fee distribution while Oregon Parks and Recreation Department retains 65%. This ratio is slated to change in 2015 to 70% OPRD and 30% Oregon counties. The reality is that the statewide distribution of RV camping sites is very close to a 50 \ 50 split between OPRD managed park sites and county park sites. In Columbia County's case we provide 100% of th RV camping sites and OPRD has no sites.

Keeping up with ongoing maintenance at our park sites has traditionally been our park agency's primary task and it has been especially difficult the past several years as the down economy has negatively affected all of Columbia County operations. Providing an attractive, affordable, safe and clean outdoor recreation experience requires a numbers of factors to come together. Having adequate revenue to finance ongoing maintenance is likely the most critical factor for most of our county park agencies. What I can say with certainty is that Columbia County Parks is lagging behind OPRD with respect to the maintenance condition of it's park facilities. Attached is a side-by-side visual comparison of two park sites with equivalent RV camping opportunities to illustrate the point.

In conclusion, please support passage of SB 331 and help Columbia County preserve one of it's best assets - it's park sites. Thank you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Henry Heimuller', is written over a horizontal line.

Henry Heimuller, Chair

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Maintenance Needs: A side-by-side comparison

Stub Stewart State Park

Columbia County Camp Wilkerson

Park Roadway



Restrooms

