



**February 20, 2014**

**Senator Ginny Burdick, Chair**

Senate Finance and Revenue Committee 900  
Court St NE, S-213  
Salem, OR 97301

**Representative Phil Barnhart, Chair**

House Revenue Committee  
900 Court St NE, H-383  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Proposed Amendments to A-Engrossed House Bill 4005, Evergreen Bill

Dear Chairs,

I am writing in support of the Evergreen Aviation and Space Museum located here in McMinnville. This nationally and internationally acclaimed education and museum facility is in danger of ceasing operations and I am asking for your assistance in averting such a catastrophe from happening.

The Evergreen Museum complex includes world-class museums for aviation and space history, a large digital 3D theater that presents valuable historical and educational films, a unique Oregon Log grown, milled and built chapel, a state of the art educational and recreational water park, and multiple classrooms and meeting spaces located in the museum buildings and theatre. The facility hosts fundraisers and meetings for not-for-profit organizations, local agricultural and economic forums, and its grounds are often used to encourage and promote fitness programs for all ages. Much emphasis has all been placed on dedicated area for our military veterans, military ground history, and Boy Scout activities.

Evergreen strongly supports our local veterans and hosts numerous and irreplaceable educational programs that inspire and challenge students in our county. Evergreen's innovative educational science and math programs were recently praised by Oregon's deputy superintendent of schools, Rob Saxton, for partnering with the local school district so effectively to meet the state's strategic initiatives.

The Evergreen Museum complex represents one of the largest private investments in education in the history of the state. It draws almost half a million tourists to this area annually. It reached over 70,000 students in 2013.

It would be an irreplaceable loss to the county and to the state if this amazing museum complex is forced to close its doors, but most of all it would be an unmitigated injustice to the citizens and students of Oregon.

A closed facility would not be paying any taxes and would be a multimillion-dollar loss to the region and the state. Because the parent company is in the process of bankruptcy, we are supportive of a temporary legislative solution that would give the parties time to evaluate the future and negotiate for a reasonable outcome.

Please make every effort possible to provide a solution to the property tax impasse to allow the Evergreen Museum complex to remain open.

Respectfully,

*Richard L. 'Rick' Olson*

Richard L. 'Rick' Olson, Mayor  
City of McMinnville

**Office of the Mayor**

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