



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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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,

We are writing in support of the Evergreen Air Museum in Yamhill County. This incredible, nationally and internationally acclaimed facility is in imminent danger of closing forever, and we are asking for your immediate help in averting this potential tragedy.

The Evergreen Museum complex includes world-class museums for aviation history and for the space industry, an IMAX theater that presents valuable historical and educational films, a chapel, a water park, and multiple classrooms. 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.

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.

Thank you,


Kathy George, Commissioner


Allen Springer, Commissioner

Cc: Senator Larry George
Legislative Revenue Office