



HARNEY COUNTY COURT

Office of Judge Steven E. Grasty

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February 5, 2015

Chair Lee Beyer
Senate Committee on Business and Transportation
900 Court St. NE, S-419
Salem, Oregon 97301

In Support of Senate Bill 133

Dear Chair Beyer,

Prior to 2011, Harney County and Malheur County used the same inspection organization to meet our local building inspection needs. In 2011, our service provider discontinued service to Harney County. We then worked with neighboring counties to continue our local program, however we found that travel cost and service delivery timeliness did not meet our needs or our customers' needs.

In 2013, SB 582 passed which created a new opportunity to work with the state to share resources and carry out our local program through a partnership agreement. We are now "growing" our own workforce to provide inspection services, creating local jobs and are able to be much more responsive to our construction industry. We also implemented the states ePermitting program. Harney County and Malheur County now have the ability to provide our customers with on-line services. SB 133 continues this vital program for both government and business. Electronic transactions are an important tool for all governments and businesses, but especially vital in rural Oregon to reduce travel time and cost. Our contractors are able to quickly start projects even on weekends and after hours saving them time and effort.

I strongly encourage you to find a way to pass this bill and help my county and many other counties provide these services to our citizens. Without tools such as SB 582 and the ePermitting program a significant portion of the state may find it difficult to provide efficient and timely service to our communities.

Respectfully,

Steven E. Grasty
Judge, Harney County Court

SEG:sj