

REVENUE:

FISCAL:

SUBSEQUENT REFERRAL TO:

Action:

Vote:

Yeas:

Nays:

Exc.:

Prepared By: James LaBar, Administrator

Meeting Dates: 3/23

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Appropriates moneys from General Fund to Oregon Department of Administrative Services, for State Fair Council, for conducting Oregon State Fair, carrying out state fairground business operations or operating state fairground properties and facilities. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2015.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Appropriates \$3,750,000 out of the General Fund, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2015, for the operation of the State Fair Council and Oregon State Fair and start-up expenses. Appropriates \$7,475,000 out of the General Fund, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2015, which may be expended for the repair, deferred maintenance or insurance of state fairground properties and facilities or for capital expenditures for buildings, furniture, fixtures or equipment.

BACKGROUND: The Oregon State Fair began in 1858 as an agricultural exhibition and expanded in 1977 to include an exposition center. In 1981, the legislature directed the Oregon State Fair and Exposition Center (Fair) to become financially self-supporting and removed General Fund support. In 1986, the Legislature authorized the Fair to sell up to \$10 million in revenue bonds to renovate the horse stadium, build a new livestock pavilion, and construct an outdoor amphitheater. The Fair, however, was unable to generate sufficient revenue to meet both operating and maintenance costs. In 1997, the Legislative Assembly requested the Joint Legislative Audit Committee evaluate and identify solutions to the Fair's problems. In 2005, House Bill 3502 shifted management of the Fair to Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (ORPD) in order to curb the Fair's reliance on the state's General Fund. ORPD has proposed that the Fair and exposition center would benefit from a new governance structure. In 2013, Senate Bill 7 provided for the establishment of the Council as a public corporation to conduct and oversee the Fair and exposition center and associated operations.