

March 20, 2017

Oregon House Committee on Economic Development and Trade

HB 2012

Testimony of Mike McArthur, Executive Director, Association of Oregon Counties:

If you've seen one county, in Oregon; you've seen one county in Oregon.

We refer to the region as "West Idaho".

Border counties can face unique challenges due to differences in state and local structures.

None more than Malheur:

- > It is geographically isolated from the rest of Oregon
- > It competes with Idaho's tax and land use structure

Malheur County exemplifies this distinction.

- > The name itself translates to "Bad Fortune"

Many rural counties lack capacity to develop economic strategies and projects.

In other parts of the country regional organizations have been developed to address unique problems: See Appalachia Regional Commission:

<https://www.arc.gov/about/index.asp>

HB 2012 proposes something similar for this far east region of Oregon.

We believe it's necessary and should be supported.

AOC would be interested in partnering with Business Oregon in to provide staffing to the Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Board.

Counties are closely connected to regional solutions collaborative efforts and are able to leverage local public, private and philanthropic resources.

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