

Madame Chair Kotek and Representative Bentz and Members of the Committee

My name is Paul Skeen. My address is 2871 Clark Blvd., Nyssa, OR

When you came to visit here in June last year, Madam Chair Kotek, I was supposed to take you around our area. I ended up having knee surgery and had to send my son Cameron in my place. I can't tell you how much it meant that you took the time and interest to come to Malheur County to see our challenges firsthand.

Thank you co-sponsoring House Bill 2012 which will develop an Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Region.

I am President of Malheur County Onion Growers Assn.

Malheur County is the largest onion growing county in the United States.

We produce well over 12,000 acres of yellow, red and white onions.

We grow onions in association with Idaho and work with them on all aspects of research, promotion, and marketing.

Thank you so much for this Bill and recognizing the unique needs of our area because of our proximity to Idaho.

The most important need that we have here is to level our playing field with Idaho.

This is why I am so excited about the Trans Load Facility. It will help us tremendously with our transportation and should bring good paying jobs with it.

We send out over 24,000 semi loads of onions annually throughout the US, and this will allow us become more competitive.