

Subject: Oregon Fair Funding Budget Cuts
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 9:21:56 AM

7/22/2020

Dear Ways and Means subcommittee,

Last week the Jackson County 4-H & FFA program held its annual youth and livestock shows at our local fairgrounds, called the Expo. Educators and 4-H Leaders designed a safe and educational, in-person experience that followed all COVID safety guidelines. Since we have a large 4-H & FFA program with over 720 youth, we would not have been able to accomplish the physical distancing, bathroom sanitation, one way traffic flow, and outdoor space requirements without using the Expo's multiple buildings and well-trained staff. Youth exhibited their art, photography, chickens, pigs, steers, horses and dogs over the course of 9 days, and we used every building the Fairgrounds had to keep participants safe.

I enjoy using the Expo year round for our horse clinics and animal husbandry workshops. Now more than ever our kids and families need large spaces to safely participate in hands-on opportunities. I need a facility that is well maintained for their safety. I want to continue to use a space that is accessible to families with disabilities. 4-H simply cannot afford to use the fairgrounds if their rental prices increase. Please reconsider the potential \$1 million in cuts of lottery fund allocations to fairs. We need our fairgrounds to continue our educational mission. Thank you.

Sincerely,

--Lena

Stay Safe, Stay Positive, and Stay 4-H Strong.

Lena Hosking, Assistant Professor of Practice
Oregon State University
OSU Extension Service – Jackson County | College of Public Health & Human Sciences
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4-H Youth Development - A community of young people across America who are learning leadership, citizenship and life skills through hands-on projects.

Subject: testimony about cuts to fair funding
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 12:59:53 PM

Two questions have come up. Why should the State fund fairs when they are cancelled this season? Secondly, should fair funding from the State be maintained in the current and upcoming difficult climate?

First of all, Multnomah County Fair IS planning to have an event this year. We have had to postpone twice, but we realize how important this is to our community and our youth exhibitors, so we are planning a modified event for early October. We will have a Harvest Festival and Creative Living fair, featuring homemade crafts, needlework, foods, and also photography, art, and horticulture exhibits. The fair will be promoted in appreciation to all of the front line workers who have helped sustain our community through the crisis.

Multnomah County Fair is dependent upon State funding to exist. We have no staff, including no office staff, we don't have the funds to hire anyone. We provide our manager \$9000 per year to plan the fair, coordinate vendors, bring in entertainment, and create the layout of our event. We pay our Superintendents a small stipend to run their departments. All the rest of the work is done by a Fair Board of five volunteers and a small number of additional volunteers. With a group this small, most of whom are working to support their families, we haven't been able to host other fundraisers or garner grants or other forms of support. Aside from the lottery funds, we take in annually only \$10,000-\$15,000 in vendor fees and small donations, giving us a total budget of about \$65,000 each year to put on our entire fair.

We do not own a fairgrounds as we don't have the financial ability to purchase and maintain facilities. Since Multnomah County government sold our grounds off many years ago and have no involvement with our fair, we rent space from Historic Oaks Park to hold our event. County government also cut funding to our 4-H programs, so we created youth categories in order to encourage the 4-H kids to keep working on their projects and learning. While we are not able to directly offer year round youth programs, we work with different youth organizations to encourage and assist kids up to age 18 to participate in our youth fair categories. Our youth categories have been filling every year and we keep having to increase our budget for premiums paid out. Since we are under the rules of Oaks Park, we are not able to charge a gate admission and have no direct way of earning any significant funds for our youth program, so are dependent of the State lottery funds and, without that, we will likely be the first county fair in Oregon to cease to exist. I understand that many of the smaller counties are in the same boat, so others will likely follow.

Personal story: I was a very shy and withdrawn child with no self confidence. I didn't fit in with any school activities and did not want to participate. In the late 60's, my grandmothers encouraged and supported my participation in fairs and got me started on growing a garden and other projects so I could have entries. Over the years it taught me a work ethic and gave me confidence that I would not have gained in the school system or other youth activities. Participating in the local fairs taught me how to interact with others and the confidence to express myself to others individually and in a group. Today, I am a successful adult who holds leadership in several community groups. Aside from my fair participation, I am President and Accreditation Chair of Pacific NW Dahlia Assn, Publicity and PR Coordinator for American Dahlia Society, volunteer moderator for my Nextdoor website neighborhood, publicist for the 82nd Avenue of Roses parade, and have been Chairperson or President for a number of community events. I have also produced and hosted a national and regional award winning local community television program since 1986. I attribute much of my own success and ability to contribute to my community to my early training in working with fairs.

The current climate is presenting a significant challenge for today's youth. Please don't deny them the opportunities that I had, though fair participation. Continue to provide the needed State funding so that other youth may receive the many unique benefits that our fairs offer.

Larry Smith, President
Friends of Multnomah County Fair Board

Subject: Fair Funding
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:11:18 PM

Legislators. I ask that you reconsider removing the funding from county fairs. Yamhill County Fair has served the citizen's and people of the State of Oregon since 1854. We have brought generations of family's from the rural areas to city to show their wares and skills to everyone. Some things have changed a little since the first fair in Oregon. We continue to serve all citizens but have concentrated on the youth. They will be the ones who will continue this tradition for the next 166 years. We are proud of the fact that the youth are interested and have seen a growth in the amount of youth who want to participate in the fair. The funding allows us to keep this affordable for family's to participate in the fair and all the youth groups that use the facility.

I had the County Sheriff tell me that the programs we have at the fairgrounds were great. He could only remember one time in 25 years of service that he arrested a youth that was involved in the programs we support.

While the amount does not seem large in reference to the state budget, it will allow us to keep helping youth through next year. Yamhill County Fair has lost over \$150,000.00 in income since March and as the COVID situation continues to decrease our income and the ability to rent the facility, it makes it tough to do all we can to keep the youth engaged. In Yamhill County's case the fair and fairgrounds are not in the county's general fund. We receive no TLT monies. We receive the \$53,000.00 from the State and \$70,000.00 from Lottery funds the county gives us. The rest of the \$800,000.00 budget was made by rentals of the facility. As you well know the lottery funds are going to be greatly reduced due to the lack of players.

I apologize for not being able to come before you to testify, but since we have had to make cuts in staffing, I am also doing the maintenance and repairs along with the management of the fairgrounds. We are committed to prevail through all this and hope the that you will see the value of the funds that are committed to fairs and what do for the community.

Thank you for your time.

Gary Wertz, Manager

Yamhill County Fair and Event Center

2070 NE Lafayette Ave

McMinnville, Or 97128

503-434-7524

"OREGONS OLDEST FAIR, Since 1854"

Subject: County fair funding
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:56:42 PM

I am writing to you to ask/plead with you to not cut the funds for county fairs. I'm from Grant County total population of about 7 thousand people and the county fair is the one thing that brings us all together once a year. Although we get support from the few businesses in our county there is just not enough resources to make up the gap that would be left if you were to cut the current dollars we receive. Please help us continue to bring our county citizens together for our Grant County Fair.

Thank you,

Donna Palmer

Subject: fair funding
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:05:23 PM

The Hood River County Fair Board wants to Thank You for giving us this opportunity to provide you with much needed information which hopefully will help our fair funding. Our fair buildings and grounds are used for activities all year long. We are the community source for many activities of our residence and county functions. We provide a reasonably price location for many activities all year long. We are the largest facility in the county for holding these events. We are not a part of the county funding so we rely on what we bring in to cover everything. If our funding is cut so drastically we will be in jeopardy of having to close. So far this year we are down over \$180,000 and that does not include fair. We need help.

4-H/FFA are continuing to hold a fair this year. It will serve close to 200 youth. Virtual animal showing is new to us but seems to be working for these youth. They are working hard to provide the kids with support for their efforts. Our animal auction is also going to be a virtual auction which will be very different but hopefully successful for the youth in our area.

We would truly appreciate the consideration from the committee in helping us get the fair funding back to the original basis. We appreciate any support you can give.

Thank You

Clara Rice, Manager

Hood River County Fair

Subject: Fund County Fairs
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:53:05 PM

Dear Legislators,

For over 30 years I have toured the world as a comedy juggler. I have performed at Asian international festivals, European theaters and American county fairs. In my experience, there is no better place to see families playing together across as many as 4 generations than at American county fairs. They are an example of person to person commerce, local pride and regional education.

Please do not cut county fair funding. Instead, support the American family by bringing generations together to see what their county neighbors do and are capable of.

Thank You,

Rhys Thomas
www.jugglemania.com
503-282-1429
6647 NE Going St.
Portland, OR
97218

Subject: Funding for County Fairs
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 4:04:25 PM

Just a quick note in how important county fairs are for communities around the state for all the direct and indirect economical benefits to those communities. Fairs are also extremely important part of the educational opportunities for so many of our youth. Please fund the fairs!

Brad Tylman

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Brad's World Reptiles

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Subject: Fund the Fairs
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:16:27 PM

Hello,

I have worked at numerous County Fairs around Oregon and experienced how vital they are to the communities they serve. When you go to a small rural town, and then there are CROWDS at the fair, you know it is serving many needs of the community.

Please keep the funding going to the fairs.

thank you,
Heather Pearl

Subject: Keep the fairs
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 9:56:10 PM

Please keep supporting the fairs they are crucial community activity.

God Bless,

Micheal Hampton

Subject: Fair Funding
Date: Thursday, July 23, 2020 7:23:39 AM

Dear Oregon Legislature,

First of all, I would like to thank you for allowing me to testify Wednesday, August, 22 and also for including Oregon County fairs in the grant funding through the Oregon Cultural Society. We appreciate being recognized for our culture and tradition.

I am writing to you today to ask that you please consider leaving the Oregon County fairs Oregon Lottery funding the same. I know that getting our state's budget in balance is a tough job and I appreciate the commitment and effort that goes into it. However, without this funding the Grant County Fair, along with many other fairs may not be able to keep our doors open. If we were to lose our fairs, we would lose a part of our heritage, our culture and our traditions and the important role that agriculture plays in those areas would not be showcased.

Many fairgrounds like ours here in Grant County play a vital role in emergency management and without the support of state funding we would not be able to help our community in emergency situations. We assist youth in learning activities not only during fair week but all year long and our facility, like others, is open to all youth not just those in 4h/FFA. We depend on the funding from the state to keep those programs going.

The Grant County Fair is a huge part of our community and plays an integral part of stimulating our local economy. People who visit our fairgrounds spend money at our restaurants, gas stations, stores, motels and a variety of other small businesses in the area. If we are forced to close the doors on our fairgrounds due to a lack of funding, everyone in our small community loses.

It is my sincere hope that you will take a look at the far reaching effects a budget cut would have not only on our fairgrounds but on our community as a whole before making a decision.

As you consider this please keep in mind that most county fairs do not get tax dollars and we are unable to qualify for many grants because we are not seen as a nonprofit.

Thank you again for your time.

Mindy Winegar

Grant County Fairgrounds

411 NW Bridge Street

John Day, Or 97845

541-575-1900

winegarm@grantcounty-or.gov

Subject: County Fair Funding
Date: Thursday, July 23, 2020 12:34:47 PM

I wanted to write a quick note as to why the legislature should not cut funding for county fairs, and I thank you in advance for listening.

1. Economic impacts of fairs for the community is huge, especially since we bring in folks to our area and they stay here and keep money local to local business, and in the case of the kids livestock auction.
2. For Grant Co. It is one of our largest County Events. We have very generous local sponsors but its not enough to cover the shortfall of any budget cuts.
3. This would be devastating to the year around events for our youth at the grounds. The youth are continuously holding events and their senior projects at the grounds (no cost to the members for their community service projects). And there is much more!
4. The educational opportunities for our youth. The funding provides for clinics, seminars, and so much more. They are not limited to just the week of fair but all year around here.
5. If funding was cut today current programs would suffer immensely not only for the rest of this year but next year (2021 and possibly more). We would not as a fair/ fairgrounds be able to function at the same capacity for events/staffing/opportunities for youth.

I grew up in 4-H, and FFA from 5-12th , 7-12th and then became a horse judging coach for 3 years. I graduated from OSU and Studied Agricultural Education, and then taught for a year in one of our local schools. The programs and fair events is what provided me with the opportunity to see growth in myself as a individual, and the growth for other youth around me, and to want more for our communities. **The programs keep youth community orientated and out of trouble.**

Please,

In the interest of our youth and the opportunities that are provided by the funding, PLEASE do not cut funding to our youth and fair programs.

Courtney Montague
Grant Co. Fair Board Member
Frontier Equipment Inc. & Frontier Rental Inc. (Local Business Owner)
541-932-4777

"Life is what happens to us while we are making plans." Thomas La Mance

Subject: County Fair Budget Cuts
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:01:23 AM

I am writing to express my concern about the proposed budget cuts to county fairs. We receive roughly \$53,000 annually from lottery funds and that money accounts for one third of our public funding. This year is especially challenging. Without interim rentals our budget is already taking a huge hit. Those rentals account for a significant portion of our annual operating budget.

Our fair complex is not only the home of the Jefferson County Fair, but, during a normal year, we also host over 170 events year-round for local groups and citizens. More than 450 hours of volunteer time was donated during 2019 and fundraisers held at the fairgrounds benefitted local groups and individuals with more than \$792,000 being reinvested in our community through donations and auctions. Our annual fair had 876 local citizens who came and demonstrated their skills at everything from quilt making to growing flowers, not to mention educational displays by 4H and FFA clubs.

Our fair complex is also a critical emergency response asset for local law enforcement and public safety. We are an emergency evacuation location for the Red Cross, we serve as a reunification facility for the local school district, we are a distribution point for Public Health in the event of an outbreak or public health emergency. We host the forest service while firefighting and are a training location for State and Local SWAT teams. We have also hosted animals who have been evacuated during extreme weather.

As you can see, we are not simply a fairgrounds that operates the county fair. We are an essential resource for our community.

Please reconsider the \$1,000,000 in cuts to county fair funding. Without the support from Salem, small rural fairgrounds like ours will be required to cut programs and activities that serve our community, likely for many years to come.

Thank you,

Brian Crow
Fairgrounds Coordinator
Jefferson County



Brian Crow

**Fairgrounds Coordinator
Webmaster/Social Media Manager**

p: 541.325.5050

f: 541.475.2586

a: 430 SW Fairgrounds Road, Madras, OR 97741

Dear Co-Chair Wagner and Co-Chair Marsh,

The lottery dollars will be a big impact on us here at Douglas County Fairgrounds. We are a self sufficient department of the County and rely on our Events and Lottery Funds to keep our doors open. At this time, we have already laid off 6 full time employees, leaving us with only 3 staff. The lottery dollars that we are currently receiving would be an equivalent to another Full Time Employee. Due to the COVID19 restrictions we have already lost 1.3 million dollars of our revenue and continue to lose event more (including the 2019 Douglas County Fair). We know that there was a large Cultural Trust Fund passed and we are hoping to see some of those dollars but that is a short term solution. The Lottery Dollars are imperative to our budget and to the success of the Douglas County Fair as well as the Fairgrounds in providing our community a place to go for disasters, weddings, funerals, fundraisers and all other community gatherings! Please support all of the County Fairs and fight for our funds to not be cut!

Regards,

Dan Hults
Director
Douglas County Fairgrounds

Ciera Keith

Event & Exhibitor Coordinator

Douglas County Fairgrounds Complex

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DH Events and Entertainment

Wednesday, July 22, 2020

The Honorable Rob Wagner Co-Chair
The Honorable Pam Marsh Co-Chair
The Joint Interim Ways and Means Sub Committee on General Government
Oregon State Capital
900 Court Street Northeast
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chair Wagner and Co-Chair Marsh,
I'm writing to earnestly discourage the both of you including The Joint Interim Ways and Means Sub Committee from the recommended budget cuts of up to \$1,000,000.00 to the Previously approved 2019-21 Oregon Fairs Lottery Allocation.

DH Events and Entertainment has been a service member of The Oregon Fairs Association for over 25 years. During the course of those years I've had the pleasure and relationship with every one of those 39 Fairs. I've been to the communities. I've come to know the fair boards and staff associated with those communities. As one of the primary Oregon Fairs Entertainment providers, I've enjoyed the successes and endured the challenges year after year.

Today I want to appeal to you to understand the tremendous value bringing entertainment to secondary and tertiary markets provides the community. Let me also inject that my intention is not self serving. An old booking associate of mine once said "Ain' nobody ever got rich booking entertainment at fairs" and he was right. But I did get rich in the experience of learning and becoming a part of the historical culture of the fairs and seeing the families and the smiles on faces of kids and lastly, the cohesive bond these events create in the community. Think of the food vendors, small businesses, the rides, the midway and the entertainment, the most talked about component of the fair. Who's coming this year, and to that point, the kind of entertainment that especially caters to the hopes and anticipation of those fair audiences.

In a time when we are all praying to "return to normal", "the good old days", "remember when we...". This is an opportunity for you collectively to protect that part of American life. There still are some things in life you can't put a dollar amount on.

Sincerely,



Deni Herrmann
President
DH Events and Entertainment

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Vancouver, WA 98685
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July 22, 2020

To whom it may concern,

It is my understanding that County Fairs are being recommended for up to \$1 million in 'cuts' from their approved lottery allocations. I would like to take this opportunity to point out a few facts about County Fairs and ask for consideration in future funding.

County Fairs are more than Carnival Rides, Food Courts and Agriculture Expositions (although we believe those are important components to a successful Fair).

County Fairs provide opportunities to support local businesses, develop and implement educational opportunities, support local youth groups and organizations, generate jobs, entertain the public, embrace and educate about history and culture and many more things.

We take pride in our ability to provide a venue for arts and crafts, food preservation, photography, robotics, 4H/FFA and our ability to reach out to youth during the entire year.

Fairs provide opportunities for groups to be active and engaged, volunteer for programs, and participate in fundraisers not only during the week of Fair but all year. We offer fundraising opportunities to groups such as Pony Club, Baseball Clubs, Volleyball Clubs, Mounted Posse, Boy Scouts just to name a few. Through these organizations local youth develop skills and work ethics, learn about customer service and provide funds for their organizations and events.

We partner with local non-profits like Food for Lane County, Lane Bloodworks and others to help support their programs and the communities and people that rely upon them.

I find it very difficult during this current pandemic to even discuss these items. It is exactly these partners and youth that we are unable to accommodate and help this year due to Covid-19. To be considering a loss of funding on top of the fact that we had to cancel our annual Fair is disappointing. We need to focus on how we can make it up next year and find ways to give back even more rather than how we can absorb a loss of additional monies. We need the ability to work on how to engage and educate the youth and public moving forward and be able to provide the venue for those programs.

Please reconsider the allocation of funding and support not only the Fairs of Oregon but all the partners, workers, volunteers and youth that rely upon those venues for their programs.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Corey Buller



Lane County Fair Manager

