

January 30, 2019

Senate Committee on Business and General Government
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support SB 513 to fund the City of Mosier's fire hall and community center

Dear Chair Riley and Members of the Committee:

Friends of the Columbia Gorge ("Friends") is pleased to support SB 513 introduced by Sen. Bentz. Friends is a nonprofit organization founded in 1980 with 7,000 members. Friends is dedicated to protecting the outstanding scenic beauty, natural resources, cultural heritage and livability of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

SB 513 would provide \$2 million in funding for the construction of a fire hall and community center for the City of Mosier. The construction of the facility is critical to the future safety of the residents within the Mosier Fire District. Construction of the fire hall will facilitate the training and preparation of firefighters and provide a modern location for incident command responding to emergencies in the area. SB 513 would also allow for an upgraded city hall and community center.

In the past ten years numerous wildfires have occurred requiring Mosier to provide emergency responses and support. These include the Microwave fire in 2009, Eagle Creek fire in 2017, and the Memaloose 1 and Memaloose 2 fires in 2018. Mosier needs to upgrade facilities to better prepare for future fires, particularly with hotter, drier summers producing more frequent and intense wildfires.

In 2016, a Union Pacific train carrying nearly 3 million gallons of crude oil partially derailed in Mosier, spilling 42,000 gallons of crude oil and catching on fire. The derailment occurred within 400 feet of Mosier's elementary school while school was in session. If not for the unusually windless day, the fire would have spread to the surrounding community. While the Mosier Fire District's response was heroic, it may not have been able to protect the community had the fire spread into town.

As partial compensation for the derailment, oil spill and fire, Union Pacific donated land for a future fire hall and community center. SB 513 would help make the most of this land donation by funding the new facility.

Passing SB 513 will better prepare Mosier for future emergencies and improve the livability of the community. Please support SB 513.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael Lang
Conservation Director
Friends of the Columbia Gorge
Michael@gorgefriends.org

Cc: Senator Bentz