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Via Electronic Mail

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To: House Committee on Agriculture and Land Use; **Senator** Thatcher; **Representative:** Post; Noble
[and many others]

Re: I DO NOT SUPPORT: [SB 696]: "Mass Gatherings" in rural areas is a recipe for disaster.

Whereas **[SB 696]** attempts to remedy the defect in insurance cap of "Mass Gatherings" referencing the Oregon Tort Claims Act (OTCA) updating [ORS (433.730(1))], the cap of \$1,454,300 in my opinion is still too low. In my opinion the cap should be \$5,000,000-\$10,000,000- or more depending on the size and local of the "Mass gathering."

Case in point: "Mass Gatherings" are unfortunately growing more popular in the rural areas of Oregon as an outgrowth of the Tourism industries. I say "unfortunately" for good and just reasons. Rural Oregon does not have the required infrastructure to conduct "Mass Gatherings" in a safe and sane manner. **[SB 696]** only concerns itself with trying to fix the defect in the insurance cap according to OTCA-which is a good attempt.

Rural Oregon is the heart and soul of the agricultural economy. The roads are narrow and not designed for high traffic flows. Traffic, parking, noise and dust plumes are always a nuisance. Sanitation and solid waste issues are mitigated but usually not sufficient or appreciate.

The overriding concern is "Fire Prevention." **[SB 696]** insurance cap will not be sufficient to cover the damages caused by a catastrophic "wild-fire" that is the actual and or proximate cause flowing from the "Mass Gathering" and or the "Mass Gathering's" ancillary activities.

It is reasonable and foreseeable that a "fire" of any sort could be accidently and or purposely started. Due to narrow roads, traffic and possible lack of a large water source. First responders will be slowed and may not be able to truck-in water to suppress a small fire from becoming a conflagration quickly enough to prevent injuries, loss of life and destruction of property. Especially, since fire prevention methods such as; pre-positioning large water-tankers and Fire Engine Companies in and or around the "Mass gathering" event as part of the permitting process. Does **[SB 696]** remedy the aforementioned concerns? How much total taxpayer's money has been spent on **[SB 696]** to date?

Personally, "Mass Gatherings" in rural Oregon should be banned outright due to the aforementioned safety concerns, the protection of farm lands; equipment, structures, stored products and livestock and for the protection of the environment.* **[SB 696]** insurance cap of a measly \$1,454,300 doesn't even qualify as "pocket-change" to make the injured whole.

*Speaking of protecting the environment, on yesterday's *Joint Committee on Carbon Reduction* Agenda were **[HB 3425]** and **[HB 2020]**. Both of these Bills relate and can be applied to "Mass Gathering" permits and fee structures. After all, "Mass Gatherings" equal to "Mass Carbon Generations." **[HB 3425]** is a bungling attempt to give poor people a break on their for gasoline purchases-should Oregon be stupid enough to enact a "Cap & Trade" program. **[HB 2020]** is the creation of the *Office of Carbon Policy* which will be nestled within the political bosom of the Governor's Office. The "Regional Solutions" awarded Newberg roughly \$740,000 for a road so already rich people can develop their properties at taxpayer expense. The "Regional Solutions" is also nested within the structure of the Governor's Office and that budget was laid out in **[HB 5021]**-(the Governor's Office budget of \$16,679,710.00 isn't clear who sleeps on the couch during tough budgetary times, her girlfriend or her husband?)

So there you have it. All your worrying about when it comes to **[SB 696]** is an insurance cap that in "No" way will cover damages that could foreseeably flow from "Mass Gatherings." By the way, "Mass Gatherings" makes a hypocrisy of the work of the Joint Committee on Carbon Reduction. (I just thought you would want to know.)

Respectfully submitted,
/s/ David S. Wall