

March 4, 2021

**Testimony on House Bill 2173**

Dear Chair Lively, Vice-Chairs Cate and Kropf, and Representatives Clem, Levy, Prusak, Ruiz, and Wallan,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on House Bill 2173. This bill seems to have caused some confusion, so please let me try to clarify what's going on:

- Counties strongly support the Regional Solutions Program. Regional Solutions has become an integral part of resolving challenges all around the State of Oregon.
- Regional Solutions Coordinators are a key component of the Regional Solutions Program - counties and the state jointly pay for those Coordinators.
- During the pandemic, counties and the Governor's Office have forged a strong relationship, and have worked as partners, even if not always in perfect alignment.
- A question arose last year about how counties pay for their half of the costs, and how it is decided to allocate those resources to the range of options that are in statute (ORS 284.754).
- It turns out there is nothing in writing, which is odd - apparently it was a handshake deal of some sort.
- It also turns out that the state takes the county share of the expenses off the top of our lottery revenue allocation - which is fine.
- But there is nothing in writing on that either, which is also very odd, since that would seem to violate the distribution statute.
- Hence this bill – which is merely to codify the funding arrangement and the partnership. We are happy to consider taking care of this by way of a simple intergovernmental agreement (IGA). Attached is a possibility. But we think this needs to get taken care of in some format.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2173.

Sincerely,



Rob Bovett  
Legal Counsel and Legislative Director  
Association of Oregon Counties

**UNITED COUNTIES. UNITED OREGON.**



## RECOMMITMENT TO REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

WHEREAS Regional Solutions has become an integral part of resolving challenging issues around the State of Oregon; and

WHEREAS the Regional Solutions Coordinators are a key component of the Regional Solutions Program; and

WHEREAS counties and the state jointly pay for the costs of the Regional Solutions Coordinators as a representation of the strength of the Program and the partners' commitment to that Program; therefore,

**The state and counties recommit to the importance of the Regional Solutions Program, working together to achieve its important statutory goals, and urge the legislature to ensure that it continues to be fully funded and supported.**

DATED this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

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Kate Brown  
Governor  
State of Oregon

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Gina Nikkel  
Executive Director  
Association of Oregon Counties