



**Curry County  
Board of Commissioners**

Court Boice, *Chair*  
John Herzog, *Vice Chair*  
Christopher Paasch, *Commissioner*

94235 Moore Street/Suite #122  
Gold Beach, OR 97444  
541.247.3296  
[www.co.curry.or.us](http://www.co.curry.or.us)

March 24, 2021

Re: Letter in Support of HB 3173

Dear Legislative Members,

Historically, the Curry County Fairgrounds has stepped up when our communities needed them the most. Through the global pandemic, wildfire relief efforts and record storm events, our fairgrounds have been transformed overnight into makeshift shelter for hundreds of people and animals in many natural disasters and states of emergency.

Meanwhile, our fairs, youth education events, cultural festivals, trade shows and expositions, equestrian events, craft & hobby shows, consumer shows, non-profit fundraisers, and community social events were almost all cancelled. This left our fairgrounds financially strapped and ineligible for most federal COVID relief funding.


Our fairgrounds are a major economic hub in our community. Most recently in 2019:


- Fairgrounds in Oregon hosted 6.15 million people during annual fairs and over 17,000 local events, bringing business to local hotels, restaurants, retail establishments, and service providers.
- Over 600 non-profit groups used our fairgrounds statewide to generate more than \$10 million in charitable donations.
- 10,000 volunteers dedicated over 200,000 hours of volunteer service at their local fairgrounds.
- Fairgrounds directly employed 479 workers with a payroll of over \$10 million in Oregon.

A recent economic study by Oregon State University estimated that fairgrounds generated an economic footprint of approximately \$52 million in output, \$28 million in value-added income, and 867 full- and part-time jobs. HB 3173 will eliminate an old funding cap put in place years ago and provide an additional investment of approximately \$165,000 per county per year. The bill also funds a much-needed capital infrastructure study so that we can make sure fairgrounds are ready for events and more importantly, emergency disaster response.

Respectfully,

Curry County Board of Commissioners

  
Court Boice, Chair 3-24-21

  
John Herzog, Vice Chair

  
Christopher Paasch, Commissioner