

Dear Committee Members,

I would like to show my support for HB 3137. Fairgrounds provide a vital link to our communities, even during uncertain times.

During a normal year the fairgrounds provide so much value to their community through hosting our fairs, youth educational events, festivals, trade shows, livestock events, craft & hobby shows, social events, and so much more. These events provide a positive outlet for community development, education, expression, and economic growth.

Even during unusual times our fairgrounds become a vital part of our communities. This past year, during pandemic and wildfires, our fairgrounds proved its tremendous worth to the community. While our county may not have been as impacted as other counties around us by the wildfires, our fairgrounds still became a vital resource for people and livestock evacuations. Our fairgrounds, across the state, are known as evacuation sites for natural disasters (wildfires, flooding, etc.). This is a very valuable asset to our communities, but it doesn't provide any financial support to the fairgrounds. Many of our fairgrounds have found themselves pivoting during this pandemic. Many have been set up as vaccination sites, or as a temporary space for trials, etc. But again, these do not provide a financial support.

Most fairgrounds operate on a shoestring budget, in a normal year. As we move towards reopening, we need to provide support to these facilities that have provided so much through the years, and especially this past year, so that they can continue to provide a safe and vital role in our communities. Capital improvements have been put on hold during this shut down, we need to do all we can to support them and get them back on track. HB 3173 can be a positive step towards doing that.

Thank you,
Kristi Schrock