

I am writing in support of HB 3173. County Fairs continue to inspire the development of our youth around the state, especially in agricultural areas, giving them positive experiences to grow and learn. The County Fairgrounds offer facilities, often at reduced costs, to support the youth and their organizations to run these organizations and activities. Many of these facilities have deteriorated to the point where they are in dire need of repair or updates to meet current code, and some have currently dangerous conditions. This should be a priority, as not addressing these issues will compound the situation and result in significantly more expensive repairs in the future- or the loss of these facilities.

These facilities also offer opportunities for hosting community events that otherwise would not be held, allowing the public to be educated, informed and entertained. Historically these fairgrounds have been an integral part of community activities, and these activities should continue. Moreover, these facilities are often the locations to be used in the event of emergencies, such as the recent wildfires, for the location of displaced individuals and animals as well. While COVID has curtailed a number of these activities, these sites have served as vaccination centers, and we hope this is a short-term setback as people are intent on returning to enjoying normal activities. Please consider removing the limit on allocations to County Fairs so that they can be restored and can thrive in the future. It will be a gift to our future generations. Thank you.