

Our fairgrounds is the heartbeat of our community. It's where we gather to celebrate, where we graduate, where we commit to marriage, where we meet as colleagues, where we recreate, where we mourn and say goodbye to well known and loved community members, and where we honor a timeless tradition of our county fair. Our fairgrounds is our community go to facility, bring in a rural area doesn't have many other options.

This past year has been hard. It's been challenging and it's one I never want to experience again. I've missed our traditional events and activities that occur regularly at our fairgrounds and in our community. We've missed the weddings, the meetings, the benefit auctions and dinners, the rodeo, the community celebrations, and of course the fair. But yet I've seen our fairgrounds and staff continue to perform and give. Our fairgrounds has housed those displaced by unprecedented wildfires, it's housed displaced animals and people from flooding, its kitchen has cooked for firefighters, community member volunteers and those in need of shelter. Simple math tells me this equation is very unbalanced this past year: cancellation of events and revenue - expenses for providing when in need = a (-) NEGATIVE number. We need this bill to pass to help aid the heartbeats in all our communities. We all benefit from having a healthy prospering community asset and event(s.) I urge the delegation to please vote in favor of HB 3173