

LINN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



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DARRIN L. LANE
Administrative Officer

April 21, 2021

Co-Chairs

Senator Johnson, Senator Steiner Hayward and Representative Rayfield
Joint Committee on Ways and Means

Re: Linn County ARPA Funding Requests

Dear Co-Chairs Johnson, Steiner Hayward, Rayfield and members of the Ways & Means Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony supporting Linn County's request for ARPA project funding. Linn County has submitted two requests as detailed below. Your consideration is appreciated.

Linn County Courthouse Addition and Seismic Upgrade (\$38 Million)

Linn County was scheduled to receive funding for a new Justice Center along with several other Counties. Linn was dropped from the funding in 2020 due to an inability to provide the required matching funds when the revised project cost estimate projected a nearly threefold increase in the cost of constructing the new facility. Linn County proposed an addition to the existing Courthouse as an alternative project in 2020. The alternative would have provided the necessary outcomes with respect to space and security, however, the new proposal did not meet the criteria in place for the funding. Additionally, Linn County's existing Courthouse structure would benefit significantly from a seismic retrofit.

Given the impacts of the global pandemic, several considerations have the potential to impact a future expansion project. These impacts include changes in how additional space might be allocated, willingness of citizens to support additional bonds and levies for capital projects while significant amounts of funding have been made available from the Federal Government, and awareness of the importance of local government's role in responding to emergencies of all types.

We are very cognizant of the demand for limited available funds across the State of Oregon. We are appreciative of the direct allocation we and other local government jurisdictions are receiving from the Federal Government. We also strongly believe that this request for additional funding is essential for our citizens and all Oregonians in that this will enable Linn County and our State of Oregon partners (Courts) to carry out our essential functions during times when our citizens need us most.

Emergency Management/Emergency Preparedness Facility (\$4 Million)

Linn County Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Emergency Management Departments have demonstrated their ability to respond above and beyond public expectations to the global pandemic and Wildland Fires in 2020. Efforts are still ongoing this year with pandemic response and wildfire recovery.

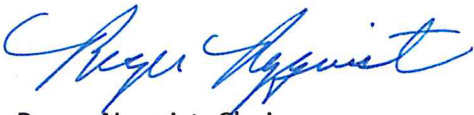
Senator Johnson, Senator Hayward and Representative Rayfield
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Events of the past year have underscored the significant need for a more efficient and effective emergency response facility and large storage facility for emergency provisions and equipment.

Linn County has located a property with existing office and warehouse space that would serve our County and the region now and into the future. Linn County will use the requested funding to purchase and upgrade the facility to house an emergency operations center and emergency preparedness staff. The facility includes approximately 60,000 square feet of warehouse space that will be utilized to store emergency response equipment and supplies. Sufficient space is available to provide for a regional distribution center for emergency preparedness supplies. This facility is located adjacent to Interstate five and is less than one mile from the Linn County Fair/Expo center where COVID-19 vaccinations are currently underway and where a sheltering operation was conducted during the 2020 wildland fires.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide this information and for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,



Roger Nyquist, Chairman

Linn County Board of Commissioners