



**Claire Elizabeth Hall
Board of Commissioners**

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March 23, 2023

Chair Grayber, Vice Chairs Lewis and Tran, Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of myself and my fellow Lincoln County Commissioners to offer our support for HB 2948. During these tumultuous recent years, our County Commons (fairgrounds) has repeatedly proven itself to be an essential facility in coping with two significant emergencies—the Echo Mountain Fire and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Echo Mountain Fire in early September 2020 wiped out three hundred homes in a matter of hours. These were rural residential structures at the far north end of Lincoln County, and many of the residents had horses and livestock. In the days after the fire, several dozen horses were evacuated to our aging, dilapidated horse barn. It was about ten days before the first of the animals could be returned to their homes.

Although our Commons was not needed as an emergency evacuation site for humans, that possibility was in play. However, the Red Cross was able to establish an emergency shelter at another site. Our facility served as a staging area for relief supplies for several months and was also home to numerous COVID-19 vaccination clinics. It's the only large, flexible covered space we have and will continue to be invaluable in future emergencies.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Claire Hall", written in a cursive style.

Claire Hall

Lincoln County Commissioner