

Submitter: Lindsay Berschauer

On Behalf  
Of:

Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management, General  
Government, and Veterans

Measure: HB2948

During the 2020 Labor Day wildfires, the Yamhill County Fairgrounds served as a critical evacuation site for Oregonians fleeing wildfires in Marion, Clackamas, and Yamhill counties. As the fire was quickly spreading, our Emergency Management team set up operations in conjunction with our Fair Board leadership on how to open up and utilize the fairgrounds property to house individuals and families, livestock, pets and horses. It served a critical role, not just in evacuation, but in the days following when residents were trying to reconnect with family members and livestock/horses that were evacuated without their knowledge. It also served as a conduit for Yamhill County residents seeking to help these families with donations of food, clothing, and goods for donations and dropoff points. The fairgrounds did not charge any fees to any affected families during this time. In fact, our Board of Commissioners has sought to make our fairgrounds whole and cover utility costs since the wildfires. Going forward, it would be extremely beneficial for county fairgrounds properties to be able to access funds that help us better prepare for and manage emergency situations. I urge your support for this bill. Thank you, Lindsay Berschauer, Yamhill County Chair