



## ALEX CUYLER

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Intergovernmental Relations Manager  
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DATE: March 24, 2023  
TO: House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government,  
and Veterans  
FROM: Alex Cuyler, Lane County Intergovernmental Relations Manager  
RE: HB 2948, relating to emergency preparedness

Dear Chair Grayber and Members of the Committee:

Lane County wishes to express its support for HB 2948 which would create a grant fund for improvements of fairgrounds that are used as emergency evacuation sites. These funds are necessary for constructing and updating fairground infrastructure that is essential for emergency needs, such as power, water, and sewer.

Fairgrounds are and continue to be a critical asset to the community during various situations such as shelters for homeless individuals, animal rescue, wildfires, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Lane County continues to commit ourselves to being available and flexible enough to accommodate almost any emergency that impact our communities. The Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB) recently developed a new emergency water station at the Lane Events Center (Fairgrounds). This allows EWEB to dispense 85 gallons of water per minute from an underground well, providing water to 24,000 customers in case of an emergency that takes out normal water. Similar resources become an essential part of emergency response during disasters like earthquakes or hazardous spills in a major river.

In the past few years, it has become more difficult to meet all the emergency preparedness needs for the site. Our facilities have outdated safety systems, ADA barriers, and the lack of HVAC in many buildings. These challenges restrict our ability to provide the space, shelter, and resources necessary to accommodate our community. During emergencies, fairgrounds serve as a centralized place for shelter and response. However, there is limited funding and ability to replace old infrastructure. HB 2948 provides local governments the opportunity to improve fairground facilities and functionality, making them more accessible to provide resources to our community during a disaster.

Fairgrounds play a large role in the effectiveness of emergency management and response. As seen in the past several years, fairgrounds have been a safe place when vulnerable communities are in need. Lane County strongly urges the passage of HB 2948 and its ability to support counties in making major improvements to facilities and enhancing the resources that can help save lives.

ELECTRONICALLY SUBMITTED BY ALEX CUYLER, LANE COUNTY  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS MANAGER