

Legislative Testimony on behalf of CAPECO

From – George Murdock, former Umatilla County Commissioner and President of the Board of the Community Action Program for East Central Oregon.

I applaud the Legislature for making the issue of homelessness in Oregon a major priority and placing it near the top of your 2023 agenda.

Shelter is a critical issue in Oregon but so too is the companion issue of providing nutrition for our citizens at risk.

For this reason I am asking for your support of a capitol request for help fund a food hub which CAPECO is hoping to build in downtown Pendleton. While the food hub is in Pendleton, CAPECO serves seven Eastern counties.

This food hub is not just designed to provide commodities – it is designed to promote better nutrition which is an essential part of not just basic needs, but also for public health and in the case of children, for more successful learning experiences.

As part of providing access to more nutritious foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables, we are including a component designed to provide education is making better use of these foods. While we will still have a delivery component due to the fact we cover thousands of square miles, we will also have a facility that is welcoming to the public and which becomes a center for healthy living.

I stepped down as a commissioner on January 3 of this but agreed to stay on as president of CAPECO in my retirement until this project is complete.

Eight years ago while attending a conference in New Orleans I spent an entire day visiting a similar program in that city. I returned to Umatilla County committed to helping duplicate that effort here. COVID delayed our efforts but we now have a site and when sufficient funds are in order, we can proceed.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

George Murdock
714 NE 2nd
Pendleton, Oregon 97801