



April 24, 2023

To the Honorable Members of the Oregon Joint Committee on Ways and Means

As you gather to consider appropriations for the biennium, on behalf of the Oregon State Fair and the county fairs of Oregon, the International Association of Fairs & Expositions would humbly ask your support of bills that would allocate dedicated funding to these important institutions.

Fairs serve their community and are a vital component of the economic engine for that community. They serve as a cultural hub and the impact on youth is immeasurable. It can be said that ***Fairs Change Lives.***

Fairgrounds around the world are called into action to serve in cases of emergency. They are uniquely positioned for this:

- *They have sufficient indoor space for staging for shelter, medical and storage.

- *Most have perimeter fencing to provide safety and security

- *There is more than adequate parking and camping spaces which can also be utilized to stage heavy equipment

- *They have unique facilities designed for animals and generally have staff and/or volunteers who are skilled in handling animals

In fact, the US Department of Homeland Security considers fairgrounds part of the Nation's "critical infrastructure".

The Oregon State Fair & Exposition Center has been there to serve the region and the state time and again in emergencies in 2020 and 2021, in particular. And not only the State Fairgrounds. County fairgrounds across the state have been called into action in countless emergencies in the past few years. To prepare for the future and be prepared for future emergencies, your support for a list of improvements necessary to all these facilities is much needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marla J. Calico".

Marla J. Calico, CFE
President & CEO

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