



Written Testimony in Support of House Bill 2171

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 2171, which would exempt small-scale camping sites on county fairgrounds from the state transient lodging tax. This bill recognizes the essential role that fairgrounds play—not only as centers of agricultural celebration and community gathering but also as critical infrastructure during emergencies.

Fairgrounds are more than venues for summer festivals; they serve as disaster relief sites during wildfires, floods, and other crises. When emergency strikes, these grounds transform into evacuation shelters for displaced families, staging areas for emergency responders, and refuge sites for livestock and pets. Many of these fairgrounds maintain modest camping facilities to accommodate fair participants, event vendors, and volunteers. Applying the transient lodging tax to these sites only increases costs for those who rely on fairgrounds for temporary shelter—whether for a planned event or an unforeseen disaster.

By limiting the exemption to fairground camping areas with no more than 50 sites that provide electrical and sewer hookups, HB 2171 ensures that the tax break is targeted to small, community-focused locations rather than large commercial campgrounds. Removing this financial burden will allow fairgrounds to remain accessible, affordable, and ready to serve Oregonians in times of need.

Fairgrounds stand at the intersection of tradition and resilience—honoring our state’s agricultural heritage while providing vital public services during emergencies. I urge the Legislature to pass HB 2171 to support the long-term viability of these essential community spaces.

Sincerely,

Brian Crow, Executive Director
Clackamas County Fair and Event Center