

TESTIMONY TO Joint Committee on Ways and Means

Re: HB5006

In support of Fair Funding (SB780, HB2304, HB2145) and Oregon State University Statewide Public Service Programs (HB2408)

Submitted by: Michelle Kaseberg, Baker City, OR

Co-Chairs Lieber and Sanchez, and other members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means:

Thank you for this opportunity to present testimony around funding for Fairgrounds and OSU Statewide programs.

In 1998 the Oregon Legislature established that 1% of Oregon Lottery funds would be disbursed to County Fairs; however there was a cap of \$1.53 million placed that still is in place today. The county's have since evolved to include not just county fair facilities, but year-round emergency response centers, county health outreach facilities, evacuation centers for humans and animals, multiple disciplinary training grounds and much more. In addition, the fairgrounds serve as a hub for economic activity. All of these on just \$53,166 per year from the Lottery fund. This was never adjusted for inflation; therefore, several things that had to be put aside due to lack of funding, including critical infrastructure.

I ask you to please consider removing the \$1.53 million cap on county funding. This would provide approximately \$200,000 to each county fairground property and could conceivably reduce the asks for county General funds, and even additional infrastructure asks to the state if there are funds to take care of what we have.

In addition, I would like to lend support to the OSU Statewides budget, which includes \$17.5 Million for the CSL; and only an additional \$6 Million over their 2023-25 budget. The CSL is important to maintain the level of service we have today and the additional funds would be used to build capacity in critical areas for Extension, Ag Experiment Stations and the Forest Research Lab. The OSU Statewides are vital in providing research and community based education to all Oregonians. We have documented proof that every dollar spent in Extension comes back to the "state" several times over. OSU is just getting ready to release the 2024 numbers and I'm excited to see our tax dollars at work.

Thank you for your consideration in approving the full ask from OSU for the Statewides program.