

Enrolled

Senate Concurrent Resolution 204

Sponsored by Senator WAGNER, Representative FAHEY, Senators SOLLMAN, GOLDEN, NASH, SMITH DB, Representative BOICE; Senators GELSER BLOUIN, GORSEK, JAMA, LIEBER, MANNING JR, MCLANE, PATTERSON, PROZANSKI, TAYLOR, Representatives ANDERSEN, BUNCH, GAMBA, GOMBERG, HELM, LEVY B, LIVELY, MARSH, NELSON, OWENS, RIEKE SMITH, SCHARF, YUNKER (at the request of Association of Oregon Counties) (Pre-session filed.)

Whereas Oregon's counties serve as the backbone of this state's democratic and governmental systems, administering all local, state and federal elections, maintaining the integrity of Oregon's property tax system, collecting and distributing property taxes on behalf of all local taxing districts, fostering access to justice by operating law libraries and partnering with the Oregon Judicial Department to house the Oregon circuit court system in county courthouses; and

Whereas Oregon's counties provide social safety net services for the most vulnerable Oregonians, safeguarding the health and wellbeing of Oregon communities through local public health programs, community mental health programs, Community Developmental Disabilities Programs, substance use and housing programs, workforce services and county Veteran Services Offices; and

Whereas Oregon communities are kept safe through a wide assortment of county public safety functions, including community corrections, emergency management services, sheriff's offices, jails, search and rescue services, marine patrols, juvenile services, criminal prosecution, emergency medical services, justice courts, 911 services, medical examiners and animal control services; and

Whereas Oregon's counties support critical public infrastructure and facilitate development to ensure the orderly and efficient growth of Oregon communities and the preservation of Oregon's deeply treasured natural resources through careful maintenance of the largest share of Oregon's transportation system, through permitting, enforcement and inspections for Oregon's county land use and building code programs and through effective management of solid waste programs and the federal Public Land Survey System in Oregon; and

Whereas in 1906, Oregon county governments formed the State Association of County Judges and Commissioners to support and represent Oregon's counties in legislative matters, which in 1936 evolved into the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC); and

Whereas the AOC is composed of the 36 counties in Oregon and their elected commissioners, judges, and chairs, and these elected officials from diverse geographies and varied political and ideological values work together to foster nonpartisan, consensus-based policies and build solutions-oriented partnerships with the state to guarantee effective service delivery to every Oregonian; and

Whereas for 120 years, the AOC has played a pivotal role in protecting, enhancing and empowering the ability of Oregon's counties to provide essential public services to every Oregonian and effectively address the ever-evolving needs and priorities of Oregon communities through legislative advocacy, professional development, promotion of best practices and fostering collaboration among elected officials; and

Whereas in the first century of its steadfast advocacy, the AOC played a crucial role in the development of countless initiatives that improved the resiliency and vitality of communities throughout Oregon; and

Whereas in the 1930s, the AOC supported the passage of early federal "Payment in Lieu of Taxes" legislation; and

Whereas in 1947, the AOC championed the first county planning law, and much later, the 1973 Land Conservation and Development Act, which made planning and development regulation mandatory; and

Whereas in the 1950s, the AOC advocated for a property appraisal program that reduced inequities in Oregon's property tax system; and

Whereas in 1961, the AOC sponsored legislation delegating to counties the power to convert to the Board of County Commissioner system if the county judge no longer had any judicial functions; and

Whereas also in 1961, the AOC worked to expand state shared revenues of net liquor receipts with counties, and that initiative expanded to cigarette tax revenues in 1965 and lottery revenues in 1991; and

Whereas from 1963 to 1966, the AOC secured double federal appropriations for National Forest road construction; and

Whereas in 1964, the AOC generated Oregon's first county roads inventory and needs study; and

Whereas in 1976, the AOC's support was crucial to the passage of the National Forest Management Act; and

Whereas in 1987, the AOC created the Forest Trust Land Advisory Committee, composed of forest trust land county commissioners who provided input on the management of Oregon forests to the State Board of Forestry and the State Forester; and

Whereas in 1989, the AOC assisted with the creation of the County Assessment Function Funding Assistance Account, which was a crucial service benefiting all local taxing districts and the public; and

Whereas in 1990, the AOC created and maintained the Integrated Road Information System, which played a critical role in county public asset management; and

Whereas in 2000, the AOC advocated in Congress for the passage of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act to stabilize revenue to counties that previously relied on fluctuating timber revenues; and

Whereas in 2014, the AOC helped create the Regional Solutions Program, a resource for community and economic development that provides collaborative governance, regional coordination and creative problem-solving to communities throughout Oregon; and

Whereas in 2024, the AOC partnered with state and local public safety agencies to form a new deflection model for people suffering from substance use disorder; and

Whereas for the last two decades, the AOC has played a key role in passing state and federal legislation to bolster intergovernmental partnership and deliver efficient and effective public services to Oregonians, including major shared revenue-based state transportation packages that have kept the traveling public moving and safe; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:

That we, the members of the Eighty-third Legislative Assembly, recognize, honor and celebrate the contributions and value of the Association of Oregon Counties on the 120th anniversary of its founding, and we encourage continued collaboration between the Legislative Assembly and our county partners on behalf of our shared constituents, the residents of Oregon.

Adopted by Senate February 10, 2026

Obadiah Rutledge, Secretary of Senate

Rob Wagner, President of Senate

Adopted by House February 24, 2026

Julie Fahey, Speaker of House