



Board of Commissioners

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February 2, 2021

House Special Committee on Wildfire Recovery
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Clem and Members of the Committee:

Our Lincoln County Board of Commissioners strongly endorses House Bill 2607, introduced by Rep. David Gomberg. HB 2607 makes an important fix to the School Construction Excise Tax (CET) statute, providing that when housing is being built to replace existing housing destroyed by wildfire or other event that is the basis for a state of emergency, that replacement housing is exempt from the CET.

Last September, more than 300 homes in North Lincoln County were destroyed by the Echo Mountain Complex fire. In an effort to remove barriers for homeowners to rebuild, our board waived all permitting and inspection fees for those replacement homes. However, the CET for those homes was larger than the county fees. After several weeks of review, the Lincoln County School Board voted to waive the CET, though they expressed concern about the lack of clarity on this point in the current statute.

Rep. Gomberg's bill makes this simple, but important fix. Families and individuals who lost their homes face a daunting series of challenges in rebuilding. We feel it is incumbent on government to do all it can to ease the burdens on these households.

Thank you for your consideration.

Doug Hunt, Chair

Claire Hall, Commissioner

Kaety Jacobson, Commissioner