

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

RESOLUTION NO. 07-025

Calling for the United States Congress and the President to Reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 for 2007

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:

- a. In 1908, the U.S. Congress promised ongoing funding to timberland counties across the nation in exchange for removing millions of acres of trees from the public tax rolls.
- b. In 2000, the U.S. Congress renewed and updated that promise with the Secure Rural Schools and Community Protection Act (PL 106-393) but that Act expired in 2006.
- c. The funding provided by PL 106-393 is owed to the citizens of Oregon counties in lieu of the taxes that were forgone to allow the creation of the National Forests.
- d. As a direct result of the expiration of PL 106-393 schools and counties in Oregon will lose an estimated \$230 million in 2007.
- e. Without PL 106-393 dollars, vital and basic public health and safety services may disappear completely from many communities in Oregon. Examples of these services include, but are not limited to, safe road maintenance, sheriff patrols, the regulation of drinking water, safe food handling practices, library services and childhood immunization programs.
- f. Coos County Oregon faces a budget shortfall of \$7 million dollars due to the expiration of PL 106-393. Coos County Commissioners are considering closing their public health department or returning it to the State of Oregon. The State of Oregon has stated it lacks the resources and infrastructure to administer those services. The Coos County Sheriff predicts that patrol deputies will be cut and that property crimes will not be prosecuted.

- g. Curry County could lose \$4 million of its \$7.9 million dollar budget without PL 106-393. Its Commissioners are unsure that Curry County can remain a viable county, asserting that additional state and federal matching funds will also be lost, leaving the county unable to meet mandated service agreements.
- h. Douglas County is bracing for a \$38 million impact to their General Fund that will require a shift in services, particularly public safety.
- i. Schools in Grant, Harney and other Oregon counties will suffer the loss of significant county contributions to their school districts, possibly resulting in shortened school days or weeks.
- j. In Jackson County, the loss of \$23 million in PL 106-393 funds will mean cuts to vital sheriff's operations and the closure of all Jackson County libraries, including two new branches previously slated to open this year.
- k. Lane County will lose one-third of their General Fund dollars, 65% of which goes to public safety.
- l. Hood River County will lose 40% of its road fund.
- m. The impact of the loss of PL 106-393 to basic services threatens to devastate not only the communities directly impacted, but also the entire state of Oregon. Widespread lack of services may discourage new businesses and industries from locating here, further injuring Oregon's fragile economic balance.
- n. The Board of County Commissioners thanks Senator Ron Wyden, Senator Gordon Smith, Congressman Peter DeFazio, Congressman Earl Blumenauer, Congresswoman Darlene Hooley, Congressman Greg Walden, and Congressman David Wu for their unwavering support and leadership on the reauthorization of PL 106-393.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Resolves:

- 1. In solidarity with our colleagues in counties across all of Oregon, the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners calls for the United States Congress and the President to immediately reauthorize the Secure Rural School and Community Self-Determination Act (PL 106-393), in order to avert an economic, public health and public safety disaster in the State of Oregon.

2. The Board of Commissioners also calls for the citizens of Oregon and all 50 states to demand that no community in the United States should go without basic services and to call for restoration of the Secure Rural School and Community Self-Determination Act.

ADOPTED this 15th day of February, 2007.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON


Ted Wheeler, Chair

REVIEWED:

AGNES SOWLE, COUNTY ATTORNEY
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By 
Agnes Sowle, County Attorney

SUBMITTED BY:

Ted Wheeler, Chair
Maria Rojo de Steffey, Commissioner, District 1
Jeff Cogen, Commissioner, District 2
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