

South-Willamette Valley & Central Coast FY2026 Community-Initiated Project Quotes:

"Thank you to Senators Merkley and Wyden for your continued support of McKenzie River Valley fire recovery efforts. We relish the opportunity to be a part of creating affordable housing opportunities that will serve working families in communities like Blue River where natural disaster has destroyed so many homes. We look forward to the revitalization of this community and a hopeful future for all of our neighbors," **said Tabitha Eck, Executive Director of McKenzie Community Land Trust.**

"We are incredibly grateful for the support and commitment from Senator Merkley in investing in early childhood education," **said LBCC Periwinkle Child Development Center Director Kendra Votava.** "This investment is vital for both our young learners and practicum students and ensures we can complete essential repairs, including the roof, security systems, and fire alarms."

"Senator Jeff Merkley and Senator Ron Wyden understand the power of working across political lines. They also understand that mid-sized communities like Albany face real challenges in expanding critical infrastructure while ensuring housing remains affordable for working families. Their leadership and support in securing this federal appropriation represent a transformative investment in East Albany," **said Maria Elena Guerra, MPA, Farmworker Housing Development Corporation Executive Director.** "This funding will allow FHDC to advance the development of approximately 130 affordable rental homes by extending Goldfish Farm Road and delivering essential water and sewer infrastructure. It is a decisive step toward strengthening our community, expanding access to stable housing, and creating long-term opportunity for low-income families and individuals."

"Safe, affordable housing is foundational to health, stability, and opportunity. This FY26 appropriation allows our Tribe to move forward with housing that meets real community needs, and we are thankful to Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden for recognizing the urgency of housing investments in Tribal and rural communities" **said Doug Barrett, Tribal Chief of the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians.**

"Access to behavioral health services saves lives and strengthens families. The support from Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden ensures our Tribe can expand critical services that meet our community where they are" **said Brad Kneaper, Tribal Council Chair of the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians.**

"This funding is more than a building. It is a commitment to healing, dignity, and long-term community resilience. We thank Senators Merkley and Wyden for standing with our Tribe and delivering results" **said Julie Siestreem, Tribal Councilmember of the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians.**

“Tribal communities often face barriers to essential healthcare infrastructure. This appropriation helps close that gap, and we deeply appreciate Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden for fighting to keep our Behavioral Health Clinic in the FY26 package” **said Teresa Spangler, Tribal Council Vice Chair of the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians.**

“For our people, this funding means hope, healing, and lives changed. Behavioral health services are not optional. They are essential. We are deeply grateful to Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden for standing with our Tribe and ensuring our community has access to care that is culturally grounded and honors who we are” **said Ashley Russell, Tribal Councilmember of the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians.**

“The inclusion of our Behavioral Health Clinic in the FY26 appropriations package reflects strong federal-Tribal partnership and sound policy investment in healthcare infrastructure. We thank Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden for their leadership and for recognizing the long-term value of Tribal-led solutions” **said Iliana Montiel, Tribal Councilmember of the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians.**

“Corvallis Daytime Drop-in Center (CDDC) is joyful and honored to partner with Senators Merkley and Wyden. This generous funding will catalyze CDDC's Homelessness Navigation and Resilience Center project in Benton County. This exciting collaboration helps CDDC and our guests realize a long-time vision to create a safer, more compassionate and just community for our neighbors experiencing homelessness” **said Allison Hobgood, Co-Executive Director, on behalf of CDDC and our guests**

“We are sincerely grateful for the continued efforts of Senators Merkley and Wyden in their joint commitment to Oregon's children, families and elders,” **said Dr. Derenda Schubert, Executive Director, Bridge Meadows.** “Their support provides essential resources for Bridge Meadows to provide more high-quality affordable housing and delivery of services for children and their families experiencing foster care, in addition to those that include the needs of our communities' elders. We recognize the Senators as two of Bridge Meadows' many champions in our mission of cultivating intergenerational communities of care throughout the State of Oregon, where families and elders can truly flourish.”

“This funding allows Everyone Village to expand our proven, collaborative model into affordable MicroVillage housing for people earning 0–30% of AMI. These dollars will support housing that is intentionally connected to workforce development, healthcare, education, and critical community supports—creating real pathways out of poverty and into stability. This pilot builds on our demonstrated success and is designed to be scalable and replicable across Oregon. We are profoundly thankful to Senators Merkley and Wyden for their leadership and for fighting to ensure federal resources support collaborative solutions that are delivering real, measurable change,” **said Gabe Piechowicz, Founder & Executive Director, Everyone Village.**

“We are immensely thankful to Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden for their advocacy and support. This funding will enable Lane Community College to develop cutting-edge curricula and acquire essential equipment for training the next generation of skilled workers in advanced manufacturing and cybersecurity. Our collaboration with industry leaders, bolstered by this funding, will help us meet the evolving needs of the workforce, driving economic vitality and success for our graduates and our region,” **said Lane Community College President Stephanie Bulger.**