



Oregon AFSCME represents 911 Emergency Dispatchers all over Oregon. The men and women who respond to the 911 calls of your constituents are the first and most important contact they will have with the emergency response system in Oregon. From the time they hear the answer from the end of the call they have placed they are dependent on the decisions made from that moment forward. The first and most critical part of this process is that someone must answer the call, the system must be in place to assure that the call can be made and can be answered.

Make no mistake. The system works because of the partnership between lawmakers, trained staff and the willingness of rate payers to continue to pay the .75 cent fee on their phone lines and cell phones. This is the one fee that no one ever, ever complains about. That is because every citizen expects this system to work. They want assurances that it will. The only complaint you will ever hear is when our members are not able to answer their call fast enough.

AFSCME Council 75 worked with legislature and Mr. Gary Wilhelm, decades past, to establish this fee in the beginning. We worked together again to change the system for enhancements so that addresses showed when the call is made and then to charge from a simple phone number to a "line" fee to address the change in technology and the move to the increased use of cell phones.

We believe that the use of "burner phones" or disposable's creates yet another challenge for all of us to manage. We have been trying to find a middle ground, a workable compromise on how to collect the fees for these toss away phones that allow access to 911, as required by law. It is time to stop talking about how to do it and just "get r done!". The system is dependent on your quick and sure actions. Do not get sidetracked on side conversations about who pays and how. We urge you to focus on getting the fees collected and moved into the system in a way that maximizes the total revenue raised. Upgrades to the system must be made, staff must be trained up and the 911 system cannot afford more delays.

We would be remiss if we did not also mention that it is time to STOP the sweeping or the 911 account to pay for general fund obligations. The 911 fess must be spent to keep the system functioning at the highest levels with the most up to date technology.

Respond to this need as quickly as you expect our members to respond to you when you or a constituent places a critical call to 911.

Thank you

Mary Botkin, Oregon AFSCME