



OREGON FIRE DISTRICT  
DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

EDUCATION • COORDINATION • LEGISLATION

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**Testimony before the House Revenue Committee  
In Support of HB 2035, HB 2036, HB 2415, HB 2454 and HB 2496  
March 14, 2013  
Genoa Ingram**

The Oregon Fire District Directors Association (OFDDA) was formed in 1950 and serves the elected public officials of over 200 Fire Protection Districts throughout Oregon, all Special Districts formed under ORS Chapter 478. The five-member governing boards are responsible for the financial and management oversight of the Districts. They serve without compensation.

The OFDDA is the voice for these fire protection districts, most of which are small rural districts operating on an all-volunteer basis or with minimal paid positions, usually an office administrator and/or a Chief. **This legislative session, preserving and strengthening 9-1-1 funding is our chief priority.**

**HB 2035 and HB 2496:** It is absolutely crucial that the legislature extend the 9-1-1 tax to continue funding of Public Safety Answering Points and insure that calls result in the most expeditious dispatch of emergency response. Obviously, the public safety community would prefer no sunset on the tax at all, in order to provide more stability and long range planning ability. However, if that is not the will of the Committee, the extension to 2026 would be the better of the two options.

**HB 2036, HB 2415, and HB 2454:** As the current trend of dropping land lines in favor of wireless cell phones gains popularity, 9-1-1 funding continues to decrease while the need for emergency services continues to increase. According to a recent study by the Industry Council for Emergency Response Technologies (iCERT), wireless calls to 9-1-1 account for over half of all 9-1-1 calls. And, some of these jurisdictions report wireless calls represent 70%-80% of their 9-1-1 call volume. Most cellular customers pay their fair share. But with the growing popularity of pre-paid cell phones, which also regularly access 9-1-1 (at no charge), funding is not keeping pace with the cost of providing this vital service. We ask that the legislature enact a policy that will treat all cellular customers fairly and equitably and not ask some to pay the costs for a service that is available to all.

The Oregon Fire District Directors Association thanks you for the opportunity to be heard on these important proposals and urges the Committee to act favorably with regard to all aspects of 9-1-1 funding.