



American Planning Association
Oregon Chapter

PO Box 28454 Portland, OR 97228
PHONE: (503) 626-8197

oapa@oregonapa.org • <http://www.oregonapa.org>

Making Great Communities Happen

March 2, 2015

RE: HB 2270 Relating to creation of an office of state resilience and a state resilience officer position

Dear Chair Lively, Members of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness:

The Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association (OAPA) represents over 800 professional and citizen planners in the State of Oregon. OAPA would like to express our overall support for the creation of an office of State Resilience and a State Resilience Officer position. Specifically, we recommend support for HB 2270 and the creation of such an office and position within the office of the Governor. In addition, we suggest including some of the language currently contained in HB 2269 in the text of HB 2270. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important issue for Oregonians.

OAPA understands the importance of planning for natural hazards and other threats to community vitality in Oregon. Resilience planning is by definition, a multi-objective, all-hazard, all-threat endeavor. OAPA also understands the specific, unique and potentially catastrophic threat posed by the Cascadia Subduction zone. Vulnerabilities to a subduction zone earthquake exist in all corners and across all sectors of our state. The Oregon Resilience Plan effectively demonstrates the interconnectedness of a number of these sectors. Further, the plan clearly identifies the extent to which our state's economy is reliant on the provision of basic services: food, water, energy, roads, education, commerce, etc. In brief, the Cascadia Subduction zone poses real and increasing risks to lives, property, the economy and the environment in Oregon.

Improving Oregon's resilience to a Cascadia event and other chronic hazards – floods, landslides, wildfires, coastal erosion, sea-level rise, winter storms, etc. – will involve an integrated, coordinated and sustained campaign. It will require a “paradigm shift” on the part of state government and require agreement among state agencies to align their missions, strategic plans and work programs to include the shared vision of a disaster resilient state. It will involve targeted and strategic investments that reduce risks posed by a Cascadia event *AND* improve our economy, increase our competitive advantage, make our communities more livable, protect and restore the environment, diversify our infrastructure systems, etc. This is no small task. Particularly in an era where lack of coordination across state agencies is common.

Given the nature of the proposed office and position, OAPA strongly believes that coordination of state-level resilience should be managed at the highest levels of state administration. Thus, we support locating this office and position with the Office of the Governor.

OAPA also suggests incorporating some of the detailed language contained in HB 2269 that is absent from HB 2270. To that end, we are attaching draft amended bill language for your consideration.

Given the vulnerability of many Oregon communities to natural hazard events, OAPA developed a policy white paper about this topic (see attached *Resiliency: A Holistic Approach* (Dec 2014)). This white paper describes natural hazard planning in Oregon and suggests a more holistic approach to thinking about natural hazard planning.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Franklin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "J" and "F".

Jason Franklin, AICP, President
Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association