



**OREGON FIRE DISTRICT  
DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION**

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**House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness Committee  
Testimony in Support of HB 2818 and HB 3189**

**March 12, 2015**

**Mark Kreutzer, President  
Oregon Fire District Directors Association**

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 attraction and retention of volunteer firefighters has been a top priority for the fire service, both in Oregon and across the United States for a number of years. FEMA has published booklets on how to attract and retain volunteers and governors have formed task forces to study the issue.

The OFDDA believes that HB 2818, which removes a major obstacle to the OVFA's ability to receive donations via the tax check-off program, and HB 3189, which provides a \$250 tax credit to volunteer first responders, represent a small step forward in assisting volunteers. For small rural fire protection districts in particular, volunteers are the life blood of their communities and often the first responders to fires, traffic accidents and other potential tragedies.

As the number of volunteers dwindles at an alarming level, it is up to us as elected officials to make policy decisions that will provide incentives and increase training. HB 2818 and HB 3189 both accomplish this objective.

On behalf of the elected officials of Oregon's Rural Fire Protection Districts, we urge your support of HB 2818 and HB 3189 and we thank you for hearing our testimony.

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