

Are Human Service Agencies Ready for Disasters?

Testimony in Support of SB 808

**Senate Committee on Veterans and
Emergency Preparedness**

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**Jeff Rubin, PhD, CEM, Emergency Manager
Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue**

**Vice Chair, Governor's Task Force on
Resilience Plan Implementation**



Hipper et al., 2015

- **Surveyed 188 human service agencies (public, private, NFP)**
 - **Human/social services**
 - **Healthcare-related**

- **Most serve vulnerable populations**
 - **Elderly and children**
 - **Low-income or homeless**
 - **Homebound, chronic medical conditions**
 - **Racial/ethnic minorities**
 - **Limited English proficiency/literacy**



Barriers

- **Insufficient interagency coordination**
 - Insufficient real-time information exchange
- Need to coordinate with funders to ensure financial resources during disasters
- Insufficient communications/IT equipment
- Insufficient staff
- Insufficient training (non-routine events)
- **Unclear role definition**



SB 808

■ Broad scope

- Shelter & Housing
- Mass care
- Medical care
- **Recovery**

■ Complex

- Any one of these domains is huge
- Interconnected
- Can't wait until after the disaster to start



SB 808

- **It won't be easy, but...**
- **Lays foundation for core components of community resilience**
- **We won't need a major earthquake to see the benefits**