



April 13, 2015

**Clackamas County Board of Commissioners**  
**Policy Position**  
**HB 2351: Relating to emergency communication taxes**

**Clackamas County supports HB 2351:** The Board of County Commissioners supports HB 2351, which increases the rate of tax by \$0.50 per month for access to 9-1-1 emergency reporting systems, while addressing inflationary costs beginning in 2017.

This 9-1-1 emergency access tax has not increased since 1995. In those 20 years, Clackamas County has seen the population increase from 314,922 to 388,263 (2013). As you can imagine, more people means higher call volume into the emergency access lines in urban areas, but also for search and rescue calls as more and more people from the Portland Metro Area travel to Mount Hood for recreation.

Furthermore, state and federal mandates on equipment and infrastructure continue to increase. Clackamas County is an Oregon leader in collaborative communication responses, and currently works with other local and regional 9-1-1 providers to share costs and ensure Clackamas County has safe and reliable access to 9-1-1 services. Even with these cost sharing tools, the 9-1-1 tax only covers approximately 18% of our operations. The cost-of-living adjustments proposed by HB 2351 will also help to ensure 9-1-1 service providers have access to industry standard technology to meet state and federal requirements.

Clackamas County appreciates the legislature's leadership in the 2014 session to support an emergency access tax for prepaid wireless phones. We believe the proposed increase of \$0.50 per month is a reasonable approach to ensuring a high standard of emergency service communications. We urge a "yes" vote on HB 2351.

Please contact Chris Lyons at [clyons@clackamas.us](mailto:clyons@clackamas.us) for more information.