

# Jackson County Fire District 3

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To: House Committee on Rural Communities, Land Use, and Water  
From: Dan Petersen, Fire Chief  
Date: April 14, 2015  
Re: Support of HB 3213

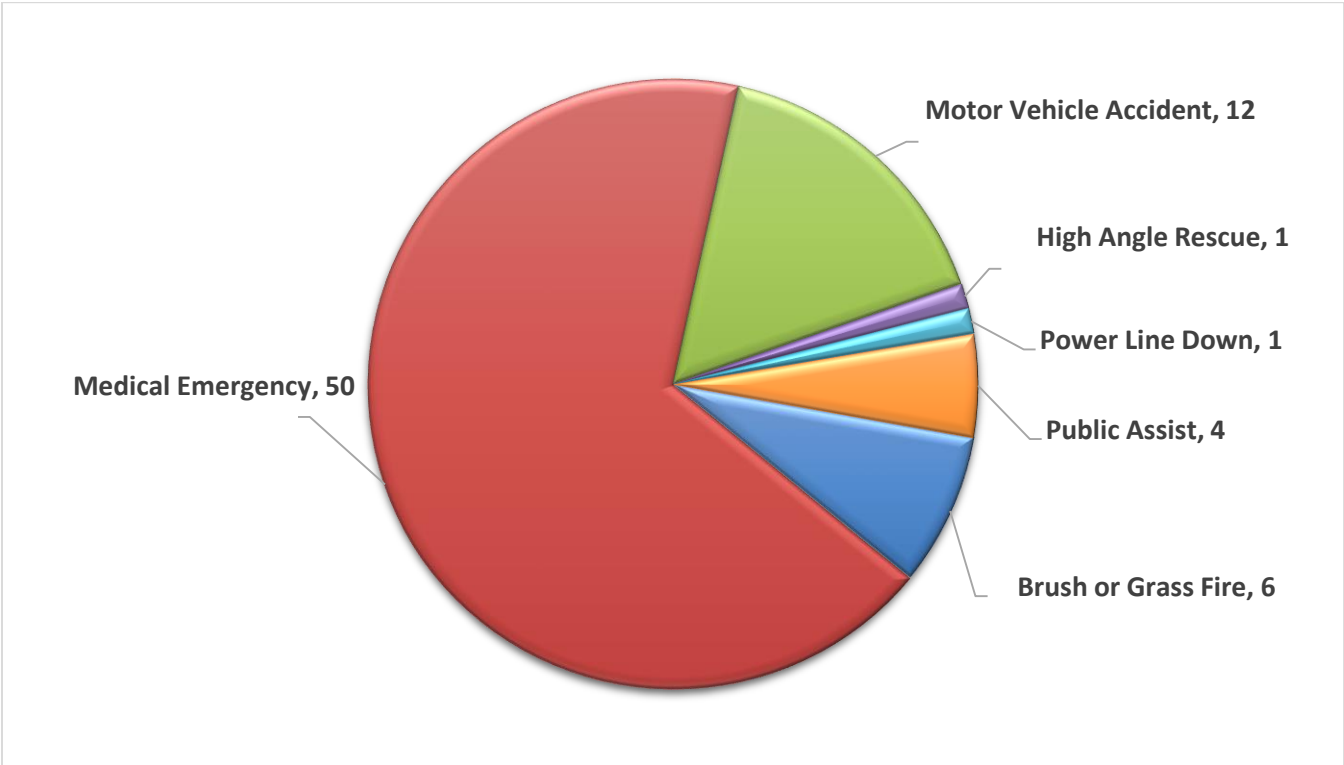
This memo serves as our Fire District's support of House Bill 3213 and an attempt to explain why this is an important piece of legislation to rural fire districts in Oregon. In 1969, tax laws were modified so that "timber" land without structures would not pay the property tax to local fire districts. Fire districts did not lose any revenue since the removal of specific properties did not change the base levy, however, other tax payers of the District made up the difference through an increased tax rate. With the passage of Measure 47/50 and the establishment of a permanent tax rate, changes in available AV directly affect the revenue for fire districts in the state.

Over the last thirty years many communities served by fire districts have asked their agencies to become "full service" fire and rescue agencies. These service enhancements have been driven by an increasing number of Fire Districts serving cities, industrial areas, urban containment areas, and active rural communities. The local community elects a "Board of Directors" who oversee the service delivery and adopt a budget that defines service levels for the District. Today's typical fire district provides fire protection, fire prevention, code enforcement, plans review, emergency medical, hazardous materials, search and rescue, technical rescue such as high angle rope rescue, water rescue, and vehicle extrication.

Fire Districts have a boundary defined by the county assessor that determines their response area for the service they provide year round. The challenging part of this issue is that some lands that are inside the boundary of the Fire District are not actually part of the District. Lands included in a forest protection district with no improvements are excluded from the Fire District. We value our partnership with ODF and do not want to reduce their capability during the typical three month fire season that Southern Oregon experiences, however, there are a number of non-fire events that also occur on these properties.

Over the last five years, Jackson County Fire District 3 responded to 74 incidents on lands that are inside the boundary of the Fire District but not actually in the District due to the forest protection district. 50 medical emergencies, 12 motor vehicle accidents, six grass or brush fires, four public assists, one power line down, and one high angle rescue.

Please consider House Bill 3213 as an option to address this challenge for our Fire District.



**Jackson County Fire District 3 emergency response over the last five years on lands that are inside the county defined fire district boundary but not included as part of the Fire District tax base due to the forest protection district classification. Data based on regional dispatch center CAD data imported into a GIS layer.**