



PORTLAND FIRE & RESCUE



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Representative Paul Holvey, Chair
House Committee on Business and Labor
900 Court Street, NE, Hearing Room E
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 2183

Dear Chairperson Paul Holvey and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the City of Portland's Portland Fire & Rescue, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding our concerns for HB 2183, which would transfer authority relating to plan review and inspections of health care facilities from the State Fire Marshal to the Building Codes Division. Portland Fire & Rescue is highly involved in the permit and inspection process in the City of Portland, and I am concerned this bill as written may have an unintended consequence that could jeopardize the safety of health care workers, patients, and firefighters.

HB 2183 mandates that local jurisdictions cease all fire and life safety plan review for these health care facilities. Portland's Bureau of Development Services and Portland Fire & Rescue have a strong partnership and collaborate in the permit and inspection process for all commercial buildings, including health care facilities in the City of Portland. Our involvement ensures these facilities meet current codes and that our firefighters can safely access their employees and patients to provide fire and life safety protection. This includes our ability to ensure these facilities have adequate firefighting water supply to extinguish any potential fires.

HB 2183 also mandates that local fire departments cease all periodic fire inspections at these healthcare facilities. Periodic inspections are critical to ensure these facilities are maintained and operated in a safe manner. Our fire prevention program provides a tremendous benefit to the safety and welfare of not only the healthcare providers who work at these facilities, but also to their patients – who are among the most vulnerable members of our community. These periodic inspections help keep our firefighters familiar with health care facilities so that they are able to safely navigate healthcare facilities when they put their lives at risk during emergency incidents. We appreciate that a workgroup convened by the Governor developed recommendations to improve the coordination for the permitting process for these types of medical facilities. We urge the committee to not move HB 2183 forward so those recommendations can be fully implemented.

Respectfully,

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