



American Red Cross
Cascades Region

Oregon Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety
Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Co-Chair Winters, Co-Chair Stark, members of the committee, I am Cara Sloman, Regional Disaster Officer for the American Red Cross Cascades Region. We have the pleasure of working with the Oregon Military Department and the Office of Emergency Management in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery activities across Oregon and appreciate the opportunity to speak in support of the Office of Emergency Management.

Your local American Red Cross, serving communities across Oregon, responds to an average of two disasters a day, providing families immediate disaster assistance, including resources for food, clothing, shelter, and health related needs. While the most common local disasters in Oregon are home fires that affect a single family at a time, we also respond to larger disasters like wildfires, winter storms, and flooding that may impact entire communities. We work with communities to prepare for disasters of all kinds and commonly respond to house fires, wildfires, floods, and other severe weather events each year in Oregon. We also work to build readiness for the catastrophic hazards we face such as Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake. As we are all aware, a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake will require an unprecedented response. There will be an immediate need for life sustaining mass care and mass displacement services that will require a whole community response. The Red Cross is a key support agency for ESF-6 and works with our government and community partners to support mass care planning efforts.

Currently, to help support the need for public education about the Cascadia Subduction Zone, the Red Cross offers a wide range of preparedness education programs, including a special event called Prepare Out Loud. Since last spring more than 5,000 people have attended a Prepare Out Loud presentation and learned about the Cascadia Subduction zone and tangible actions they can take to build their family's preparedness and resilience for disasters of all kinds. A key component of this program is encouraging people to talk about and share their preparedness actions with their friends, families, and social networks so that they can influence them to take preparedness actions too. We have been honored to have the Office of Emergency Management as a partner in publicizing and promoting the program as well as participating in some of the events as well.

Every fall the Office of Emergency Management and the Red Cross work together to promote the Great Shake Out to encourage all Oregonians to participate in an earthquake safety drill and take actions to grow the preparedness for earthquakes. All of us know that we work better when we work together as a community and we

appreciate our partnerships with the Office of Emergency Management in delivering and supporting preparedness programs across Oregon.

We work side by side with the Office of Emergency Management in response and recovery activities when disasters occur in Oregon. Red Cross representatives participate in the Oregon Emergency Response Council, the Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission, and Red Cross representatives deploy to the State Emergency Operations Center when it is activated. The Red Cross plays a key role in the delivery of mass care services during times of disaster across Oregon and opens shelters multiple times each year when Oregonians are displaced from their homes due to disasters such as wildfire, floods, and other severe weather.

The Red Cross participated in the development of the Oregon Resilience Plan which outlines the impacts of a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and the work that is needed to improve the resilience of our physical infrastructure. Beyond infrastructure, we must also focus on the resilience work necessary to address human needs. The Cascadia Rising Exercise last summer helped identify opportunities to build capacity and partnerships around mass care planning, which the Red Cross is incorporating into our programs to build readiness for a Cascadia event. We also support the planning efforts undertaken at the city, county, and state levels to plan for mass care & mass displacement following this life changing event. We know after this event, sheltering is not about cots and blankets, but rather the ability to keep people safe from the elements. The immediate need for sanitation, water, and food supplies will require specialized logistics teams from the federal government and other response agencies to keep survivors alive and healthy. We are committed to continuing to work with the Office of Emergency Management to identify strategies for building readiness and to coordinate response and response activities to reduce the human impacts that will occur following a Cascadia Subduction Zone event.

The American Red Cross appreciates the opportunity to provide this information today, to be here in support of Oregon's Office of Emergency Management. The resources you allocate towards disaster preparedness, response, and recovery activities through Oregon's Office of Emergency Management are much needed and greatly appreciated. Thank you for your support of disaster preparedness, response, and recovery needs across Oregon.