



**OREGON FIRE DISTRICT  
DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION**

EDUCATION • COORDINATION • LEGISLATION

1284 Court Street N.E. • SALEM, OREGON 97301  
1-800-223-9708 • (503) 378-0896 • FAX (503) 364-9919

**Statement of Support: HB 2470  
House Committee on Economic Development and Trade  
March 15, 2017 – 8:00 am, Hearing Room E  
Genoa Ingram**

The Oregon Fire District Directors Association (OFDDA) was formed in 1950 and serves the elected public officials of over 200 Fire Protection Districts throughout Oregon, all Special Districts formed under ORS Chapter 478. The five-member governing boards are responsible for the financial and management oversight of the Districts. They serve without compensation.

The OFDDA is in support of HB 2470 and welcomes the opportunity to engage in a discussion of how we strike middle ground in the urban renewal process. Many of our district directors are business owners and operators with strong ties to the business community. They are architects, builders, store owners or managers, attorneys, restaurateurs, or providers of other vital services. They want to see their communities flourish. They want to see job markets grow; they want to drive out blight.

The problem is, they also have a strong belief in providing public safety and other essential services. What voters often do not understand is that when funds are syphoned off for a new urban renewal project, it is not “free money”. It is money that the voters have approved to fund specific services. In order to continue to provide those services at the same level, fire districts and other overlapping taxing districts may have to go out for bonds to make up the difference.

Worse yet, while there may be the promise that projects will result in an even greater return in property tax, the truth is that many projects will never be added to the tax rolls. Public parks and public buildings, for example, will never return a dime to the other local districts whose funds have been depleted. Yet those same districts will continue to provide services such as water and sewer, fire protection, and education.

The fire service supports transparency and voter input into the process and hopes you will move the bill forward in order for the conversation to continue. Thank you.