



Multnomah County Sheriff's Office
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MICHAEL REESE
SHERIFF

Exemplary service for a safe, livable community

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February 8, 2018

Oregon State Legislature
House Committee on Veteran and Emergency Preparedness
Attn: Representative Evans, Chair
900 Court Street
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Evans and members of the Veteran and Emergency Preparedness Committee,

The Multnomah County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) expresses its appreciation of HB 4152, which professionally supports public safety missions related to wildfire recovery, mitigation and preparedness.

The Sheriff's Office provides round-the-clock law enforcement services in both urban and rural settings, responding to nearly 6,000 calls for service, across more than 431 square miles of land and 34 square miles of waterways. Our members not only keep our communities safe, but are the first responders to more than three (3) million visitors who travel to Multnomah County to take in its natural beauty.

Last Labor Day, a fire originated along Eagle Creek Trail, in the Columbia River Gorge. Our public safety partners to our East, did an excellent job of responding to the initial incident and rescuing approximately 140 recreational patrons from trails during the first 24 hours. However, as winds changed, the speed and direction of the fire took a rapid turn for the worse, growing into an aggressive 20,000 acre forest fire in mere hours.

Our Incident Command Team was ready – intergovernmental communication lines were opened, trails were closed, and evacuation orders were issued. Our members went door-to-door, helping vulnerable residents and animals escape danger, arrive safely to shelter and receive services. From there the fire was monitored, property was protected, the community was supported and information was shared until it was safe to return home.

The Eagle Creek Fire was a significant incident, which continues to impact MCSO's budget, operations, and our community. During this unprecedented season of activity, we reprioritized our services to meet the needs of the community and are proud to say we gave Oregonians the best we had to offer. Yet, we learned a lot from this test. We would appreciate your help in the form of equipment and training to ensure we continue to be good public safety partners and stewards of Oregon's beloved open spaces.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Reese".

Michael Reese
SHERIFF