

Paul L Evans
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 20



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

February 21, 2019

House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness
Oregon House of Representatives
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Colleagues:

Oregon faces significant challenges throughout our existing emergency management structures and systems: we either accept the status quo – knowing that we are not sufficiently prepared for catastrophic events, or we recognize this moment and the opportunities before us – and reform our delivery mechanisms. The following package of legislative concepts are offered to provide a framework for the conversation.

House Bill 2535 would establish a task force focused upon development of a full-spectrum emergency services strategic vision: emphasizing routine as well as catastrophic public safety services delivery. It is my hope that this measure will serve as a vehicle for recommendations including but not limited to the following: a) realignment of the office of Emergency Management from the Oregon Military Department into a stand-alone agency; b) realignment of the office of the State Fire Marshal from the Oregon State Police into a stand-alone agency; as well as c) development of a Public Safety Commission within the Office of the Governor for a comprehensive, simplified coordination of disaster management.

House Bill 2536 would establish the Open Spaces Are Safe Places Investment Fund providing a vehicle for strategic investments in statewide resiliency recommended through the work of House Bill 2735, a task force focused upon determining the scale, scope, and size of disaster response/recovery facilities. We must establish an integrated network of rally points, response facilities, recovery staging areas, and large-scale logistical support bases. The priority of this task force will be to deliver a comprehensive roadmap for a beginning phase of investments based upon standardized capacity and geography. If done correctly, this will initiate development of a statewide network that could – and would – save lives when catastrophic events unfold.

This package provides for a rational, reasonable, and responsible conversation about how we mitigate, prepare, respond, and recover from disasters. It yields a framework for implementing the Governor's resiliency targets, and provides us with flexible instruments for the formal as well as informal dialogue needed for making necessary change.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul L. Evans".

Paul L. Evans