



Serving with Honor... Making a Difference

March 6, 2019

**To: Paul Evans, Chair
House Committee on Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness**

From: Central Lane 9-1-1 Communications Center

SUBJECT: HB 2449 – Letter of Support

CLCC is submitting this letter in support of increasing the Oregon Emergency Communications Tax. As you can imagine, public safety agency costs including overhead, technology and personnel have risen significantly since 1995. Unfortunately the money we receive from the tax is currently just a fraction of what it takes to adequately fund and staff our 9-1-1 Center. In order to ensure that 9-1-1 Centers across our State meet industry standards and are able to provide the best possible service to our customers it is time for an increase.

Our response area includes about 90% of Lane County and our Center handles nearly 12,000 9-1-1 calls each month. This figure does not include the additional follow up phone calls, related work, computer entry, and other transactions that are necessary to appropriately process each 9-1-1 call. Like other Oregon 9-1-1 Centers, CLCC is very dependent on the funding derived from the 9-1-1 tax and the technology provided by the OEM 9-1-1 Program.

We understand from OEM that funding which is crucial to the operational needs of our 9-1-1 Centers is being cut because of their budget shortfalls. In addition to an increase in the tax, CLCC supports some changes and additions to the current language of HB2449. More of the tax needs to be directly distributed to the 9-1-1 Centers so they are sustainable:

- *Eliminate the 2% provision for counties with a population less than 40,000*
 - *The 2% provision creates an inequity in the distribution causing some Centers to receive up to 300% of their budget while other PSAP's would receive less than 20%*
- *Reduce the amount the OEM 911 Program receives to 2% from 4%*
- *Reduce the amount DAS receives to 0.5% from 1%*
- *To ensure the ongoing stability of Oregon's 9-1-1 Program, add language to this bill that would allow the interest earned on the tax to be held in an account for future infrastructure upgrades as well as the system's continued resiliency*

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