



## SERVICE DISTRICT

**Pride  
Professionalism  
Dedication**

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March 11, 2019

Paul Evans, Chair  
House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness  
900 Court St, NE  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support of HB2449

Chair Evans, Members of the Committee on Veterans and  
Emergency Preparedness

Deschutes County 9-1-1 Service District is a consolidated PSAP and provides 9-1-1 and non-emergency call answering services as well as dispatching services for fourteen different police, fire, and medical emergency response personnel. Deschutes County 9-1-1 also provides contracted services for USFS in and surrounding Deschutes County.

Deschutes County is 3,055 square miles and our center answers 23,500 calls monthly. The 9-1-1 tax currently assists with paying for the infrastructure for our telephone system and under 12% of our personnel cost for emergency call takers.

Recently, Oregon Emergency Management (OEM) had to take drastic steps to ensure the funding of replacement of outdated phone systems due to increasing costs. This change in funding out of the 9-1-1 tax will end up costing each PSAP's more money out of their local budget to pay for maintenance that OEM no longer can cover. Due to the funding challenges for OEM, Oregon and its PSAP's will have difficulty keeping up with the changes required for critical NextGen 9-1-1 technology. This means that Oregon citizens will not have access to enhanced technology that enables first responders to locate them quicker.

Deschutes County 9-1-1 requests your support of HB2449 to increase the 9-1-1 tax to \$1.50. With the increase in the tax to \$1.50 we strongly urge you to proceed with the four modifications:

- 1) Remove the 2% provision for counties with less than 40,000 population
- 2) We also request that the amount set aside for OEM is reduced from 4% to 2%.
- 3) Reduce the amount allocated to DAS from 1% to 0.5%.
- 4) Extend the 9-1-1 tax sunset to 1/1/2030

The need for an increase to the 9-1-1 tax with HB2449 is necessary, and it will help funding for all PSAP's throughout the State of Oregon. The announced changes from OEM regarding the 9-1-1 tax and the cuts that many PSAP's will be forced to take with telephone equipment and maintenance costs will have a direct impact to the future of all Oregon PSAP's. The ability to adequately staff our centers will be changed by this reduction in support from 9-1-1 tax. The increase recommended in HB2449 will ease the burden that has been brought on PSAP's and will allow us to provide the necessary emergency response to our citizens.

Respectfully submitted,



Sara Crosswhite

Director

Deschutes County 9-1-1 Service District