

Executive Director  
Keith Endacott



Operations Manager  
Joanie Rote

Business Manager  
Jessica Gibson

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

I am the Director of Klamath 911 Emergency Communications District. We are one of 3 Special District 911 centers in Oregon. There are, of course many different ways that 911 centers are governed and funded. Our base funding is through a fixed permanent rate property tax and our portion of the State 911 Tax referenced in HB 2449.

This letter is to communicate the necessity of increasing that tax. The State 911 Program no longer has sufficient funds to meet its mission. The 75 cents per line amount that has been in place since the 90's is not adequate to fund 911 call routing and receiving equipment in adequate numbers anymore. The funding simply has not kept up with the increases in technology and the State 911 Program is facing cutting funding for essential, life safety components of 911 including the actual phones used to answer the 911 call.

As the 1990's version of the phone tax becomes more and more inadequate at maintaining basic service levels the burden on local funding increases. This too brings challenges that are unacceptable. Special Districts, Service Districts etc. are required to go to the voters to approve increases in local funding. If that fails, then those that don't have user fees would have to impose them. Those that already have user fees will increase them. This does not solve a problem since it reduces capability on the response to the 911 call in order to fund the mere receipt of the 911 call.

This is not a Klamath Falls problem, this is a state wide problem. The 75 cent per line tax established in the 90's is NOT ENOUGH to meet the expectations of the statute or the citizen. It has not been increased in over 20 years. From my perspective HB 2449 seems to have the intention of funding today's technology at today's prices rather than 25 years ago. It would take someone far smarter than I am to say what that will look like in another 25 years, but I am certainly capable of making the connection that if a tax that was set up to fund the specialized equipment that receives a 911 call can no longer do that – change is long overdue.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Keith Endacott', written over a horizontal line.

Keith Endacott  
Executive Director, Klamath 911