

April 22, 2019

Representative Nancy Nathanson, Chair
House Committee on Revenue
900 Court St, NE
Salem, OR 97301
RE: Support of HB2449

Chair Nathanson, Members of the House Revenue Committee:

My name is Leslie Taylor, a resident of Yamhill County and a retired 9-1-1 center manager. I ask for your support of HB2449, so the Oregon 9-1-1 system can obtain adequate funding to adapt to modern demands on the system.

Starting my career in 1986, and retiring in 2018, I have seen many transitions in the 9-1-1 profession: pen, paper, and a phone to 4 computers and 6 monitors; from rural route addresses to a master street addressing guide; from no medical instructions to detailed lifesaving instructions; and from free 9-1-1 pay phone calls to texting 9-1-1. There has been so much change in the profession and much of it has been driven by technology and changing public expectations in the last 20 years.

From my perspective, 9-1-1 is a vital service in public safety and a core role of government. It's the one phone call people desperately want answered by a trained telecommunicator, as quickly and efficiently as possible. But due to financial constraints, and increasing demands of technology, often those organizations providing 9-1-1 service have had to scrape, plead, borrow, and pull funds from any and all available sources to fund adequate services. "Adequate"... I mean simply the best that could be done with the resources available.

The people and organizations who answer those calls, who dispatch those lifesaving resources are a resilient group. They go unnoticed and when they are doing a fantastic job, no one sees it. Through determination and professionalism, they can make it seem like everything is going along just fine. But it isn't...the 9-1-1 system in Oregon is lacking the stability, the staffing, the training, and the technology improvements that are needed to keep up with modern society.

There is an opportunity, right now, to stop falling behind. Place a priority on 9-1-1 service in Oregon. I urge your support of HB 2449.

Respectfully,

Leslie Taylor
Retired