



SHERIFF

WASHINGTON COUNTY

CONSERVING THE PEACE THROUGH VALUES DRIVEN SERVICE / SHERIFF PAT GARRETT

April 20, 2019

The Honorable Representative Nancy Nathanson, Chair
House Committee on Revenue

Oregon State Capital
900 Court St, NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support of HB 2449

Dear Chair Nathanson and Committee Members,

As the Washington County Sheriff, my office is entrusted with providing public safety services to approximately 600,000 residents, 11 cities, numerous special districts, several high-tech firms and multi-national companies. The purpose of my letter is to convey my strong support for House Bill 2449 which is critical for us to meet the needs of our community and emergency responders by adequately funding 9-1-1 operations.

The scope of our 9-1-1 center's mission is significant. In Washington County, our 9-1-1 services are provided by the Washington County Consolidated Communications Agency (WCCCA). Handling approximately 500,000 public safety calls from the community each year and an equal amount of radio dispatch requests from first responders, WCCCA is one of the highest volume 9-1-1 centers in the state.

In addition to providing services to residents of the second most populous county in Oregon, WCCCA serves our Circuit Court, Jail, Community Correction Center, Coffee Creek Correctional Facility, two regional hospitals, several Kaiser Permanente medical centers, Portland Community College Rock Creek, Pacific University, numerous school districts and Hagg Lake (the most visited lake in the State of Oregon).

Local police chiefs and I are keenly aware that funding from the 9-1-1 excise tax has declined for several years, leaving an increasing financial burden on local governments to maintain 9-1-1 operations. Regrettably, declining 9-1-1 excise tax revenue is forcing public safety leaders across the state to divert scarce public safety resources from first responders to underwrite the funding gap at 9-1-1 centers which jeopardizes safety. I respectfully request your support to HB 2449 to increase the rate of tax for emergency communications to help keep our communities safe and emergency responders equipped for success.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat Garrett".

Pat Garrett
Washington County Sheriff

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