



**OREGON FIRE DISTRICT
DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION**
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Statement of Support: SB 528
House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness
May 14, 2019 – 3:00 pm
Genoa Ingram

The Oregon Fire District Directors Association (OFDDA), formed in 1950, serves the elected public officials of over 200 Fire Protection Districts throughout Oregon, all Special Districts formed under ORS Chapter 478. The five-member governing boards, who serve without compensation, are responsible for the financial and management oversight of the Districts.

The Oregon Volunteer Firefighters Association (OVFA), formed in 1957, offers an annual training conference for volunteers, both members and non-members, providing hands-on and classroom training as well as networking opportunities. These conferences rotate around the state, helping educate and train Oregon's 7,800 volunteer firefighters who must adhere to the same training requirements as paid firefighters.

Both associations strongly support SB 528 which directs the Department of Transportation to erect and maintain roadside memorial signs for fire-fighters killed in line of duty.

Having worked with proponents of similar legislation for the Veterans' Memorial highway signs, I note that the bill requires payment of the fee prior to the department placing the sign. This funding practice has worked very well and provides an opportunity for individuals and businesses to sponsor the signs. I am not aware of any circumstance where a sign has not been placed due to lack of funding. As with the Veterans' signs, SB 528 will provide highly visible memorials typically near the vicinity of the home town of those who have fallen, where friends and family members can honor their loved one.

On behalf of rural fire protection districts throughout Oregon, we want to thank Senator Betsy Johnson for bringing SB 528 forward. The Oregon Fire District Directors Association and the Oregon Volunteer Firefighters Association thank you for the opportunity to place our comments on the record, and we urge your support.