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## Washington County Consolidated Communications Agency

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June 11, 2019

Senator Mark Hass  
900 Court St N.E., S-207  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support of HB2449-B

Dear Senator Hass,

Washington County Consolidated Communications Agency (WCCCA) is a consolidated 9-1-1 Agency which was formed under ORS190. We provide call-taking and public safety dispatching to all of the citizens and 18 police and fire agencies within Washington County and our response area extends into areas of Multnomah and Yamhill Counties. We serve a population of 589,000 within Washington County today and more than half a million calls are processed through our Center per year. We are the second largest 9-1-1 Agency in Oregon. We provide Emergency Communications System services across Washington and Clackamas Counties, and to the Cities of Newberg & Dundee in Yamhill County.

The 9-1-1 excise tax distribution to WCCCA represents 20% of our dispatch operating budget. Our members pay the lion's share of 70% to ensure we have an operating budget. As the cost of operating a consolidated communication center continues to rise, the burden continues to weigh heavily on our member agencies, who are trying to provide adequate police and fire services from their budgets as well. They have grave concerns about WCCCA's sustainability if something does not change to increase our revenues. While our population and demand for service has increased since 1995, the 9-1-1 tax has not, and that's a very real problem for the 9-1-1 function in Oregon.

Additionally, with no steady increases to match inflation, the 9-1-1 tax account utilized for purchasing equipment necessary to answer 9-1-1 calls is experiencing a shortfall, something that had to happen at some point given the trajectory of the rising costs and no increases to revenues. This can't continue if we are to provide excellence in 9-1-1 communications across our state. The risks include a reduced ability to provide service, more funds needed from our member agencies' budgets to maintain current levels of service, our inability to obtain new technologies to provide for the expected and deserved needs of our citizens. Every person in Oregon wants to be able to pick up a phone and call 9-1-1 to get the help they need. Every 9-1-1 agency in Oregon wants to be that reliable for their citizens. The 9-1-1 system cannot fail and we need help to ensure that it does not.

Clearly, the current tax does not generate sufficient funds for our current 9-1-1 function needs, nor does it provide funding for the future needs of our State 9-1-1 needs. Changes made now, ensuring funds needed for the future of 9-1-1 in Oregon, are critical to serving the citizens of Oregon during the worst times of their lives. HB2449-B is a strong step in the direction of building a more sustainable model for our emergency communications needs throughout our State. We are here to answer the call....we're asking for your support to ensure that we are able to do just that.

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17911 NW Evergreen Parkway \* Beaverton, Oregon 97006 \* (503) 690-4911

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*"Excellence In Emergency Communications"*



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WCCCA supports HB2449-B and WCCCA's Board of Commissioners supports this bill as well. We ask you for your support to increase the 9-1-1 tax \$.25 in each of the next 2 years, from \$0.75 to \$1.00 and ultimately to \$1.25 per line which can access 9-1-1, as well as the additional elements that comprise HB2449-B.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical need for 9-1-1 Public Safety.

Sincerely,

Kelly Dutra, WCCCA Executive Director

On behalf of Beaverton Mayor Denny Doyle, Chair, and WCCCA Board Members,  
Washington County Consolidated Communications Agency Board of Commissioners

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