

February 5, 2020

Oregon State Legislature
Senate Committee on General Government & Emergency Preparedness
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Senate Bill 1537 – Resiliency & Emergency Preparedness

Chair Riley and members of the Senate Committee on General Government & Emergency Preparedness:

On behalf of Oregon's 62 community hospitals and the patients they serve, the Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems (OAHS) strongly supports Senate Bill 1537. We believe that emergency preparedness and resiliency planning are of the utmost importance. OAHS appreciates that this bill will provide investments in infrastructure, improve citizen awareness and education, as well as foster individual and mass-scale preparedness for an eventual Cascadia subduction earthquake or other natural disaster.

Oregon hospitals are actively preparing for the safety and resiliency of their facilities and of their communities. In the event of a mass-scale emergency, Oregon's hospitals will likely be congregating sites for people looking for food, water, and shelter, in addition to emergency health care. It is for that reason that it is vital that both the general public and our communities, in collaboration with the state, are ready for emergency events that could leave them isolated for days or weeks.

Moreover, we strongly support continued investment in the ShakeAlert earthquake early warning system. In health care, seconds matter. The 30 seconds of early warning that could be provided by the ShakeAlert system would save lives and protect vital medical equipment and infrastructure. OAHS recognizes that for Oregon to participate in the public rollout of ShakeAlert, it must reach density targets for sensors in urban and rural areas to meet federal standards. Hospitals across the state have already agreed to have ShakeAlert sensors placed in their facilities to assist with the program.

OAHS supports the strategic resiliency planning and emergency preparedness of SB 1537 for individuals, communities, and organizations across Oregon.

Thank you,



Travis Meuwissen
Director of Advocacy
Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems