



OREGON STATE FIRE FIGHTERS COUNCIL

International Association of Fire Fighters
AFL-CIO CLC

Representative Paul Evans
Chair House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

February 9, 2020

Chair Evans, Vice Chair Lewis and Committee members,

For the record I am Karl Koenig, President of the Oregon State Fire Firefighters Council, speaking in favor of House Bill 4144, The Equipment Grant Program to update and equip Oregon's First Responders, with a priority on Urban Search and Rescue (USAR). This legislation realizes the eight (8) established teams who have continued their respective programs are in need of updated equipment and the necessary technology upgrades since first equipped in the late 1990's.

The passage of HB 4144 will provide the Oregon Homeland Security Council the proper direction to update the equipment list for those in dire need of updated approved items with proper oversight to serve all Oregonians, wherever the need may exist.

All the pieces are in place except funding. The Oregon Office of Emergency Management, with passage of HB 4144, have the needed grant funding, through the Oregon Military Department to distribute needed equipment or funds to re-equip Oregon's established USAR teams.

HB 4144 takes into consideration Oregon's most likely major emergency occurrence, in the community served, the grant recipient and their ability to keep the equipment ready for wherever it's needed in the entire State of Oregon.

This Bill takes into account previous investments in the physical Emergency Management tools needed to help in the event of an emergency. It has protections to make sure the granted equipment is in the hands of trained, ready responders, proper oversight and mission clarity.

The Oregon State Fire Fighters Council urge Committee Passage of HB 4144

Karl Koenig
President
Oregon State Fire Fighters Council

265 Commercial Street S.E., Suite 260 • Salem, Oregon 97301 • Phone (503) 540-0648 • Fax (503) 391-5878

www.osffc.org