



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

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Premier Public Safety Services

To: Chair Evans and Members of the House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

Date: February 20, 2020

Re: HB 2006 (2019 Legislative Session)

Summary of HB 2206 (2019) – Oregon Safety Assessment Program

On August 9, 2019, Governor Brown signed House Bill 2206, which directs the State Fire Marshal to develop and administer a statewide program to evaluate the condition of buildings after an emergency and determine whether the buildings may be safely occupied. The approved measure directs the State Fire Marshal to implement a statewide registry of local program coordinators, certified building evaluators, and approved trainers to conduct such safety assessments. The bill also allows local governments to enter into agreements with private contractors to conduct building occupancy safety inspections following an emergency. Lastly, HB 2206 grants the State Fire Marshal rulemaking authority to administer and implement provisions of measure.

Program Development to Date

Since the bill was signed, Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) staff have begun to research program guidelines and learn more about successes achieved in programs established in neighboring states California and Washington. To ensure close alignment with federal



recommendations, staff have also been reviewing the recently released *Post-disaster Building Safety Evaluation Guidance: Report on the Current State of Practice, including Recommendations Related to Structural and Nonstructural Safety and Habitability*.

After meeting with program staff from California and Washington, the State Fire Marshal has determined the OSFM would need, at a minimum, the equivalent of two full-time employees to administer day-to-day operations and to develop, implement and oversee a statewide, federally compliant Safety Assessment Program. These positions include a Safety Assessment Program Manager and a Program Administrative Specialist. In preparation to hire such positions, OSFM staff have written job position descriptions for both positions that meet state employee hiring guidelines.

Critical Needs

In order to conduct the required duties in these positions, a significant training and travel budget would be expected to allow travel around the state to provide training, to administer and to track certifications for local governments, for professional organizations and for other relevant agencies.

The State Fire Marshal is in a difficult position in ensuring the success of the bill's requirements, as the State Fire Marshall does not have the employee or financial resources to implement the new program as the Oregon State Police strives to adhere to balanced budget requirements. As a primarily "other funded" bureau located within the Oregon State Police, the OSFM is not in a position to assign the workload of post-emergency safety assessments to current employees.

The existing workforce in the OSFM is comprised of program-specific employees whose job duties are funded by the various industries they serve or regulate.

Annual program and employee costs are estimated to over \$200,000 for two full-time positions and program-related equipment. Without the allocation of funding and positions, implementing the program by the State Fire Marshall cannot occur.