



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

**Military Department**  
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February 4, 2021

Representative Paul Evans  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court St. NE, H-471  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Evans,

I am writing to the House Veterans and Emergency Management Committee on behalf of the Oregon Office of Emergency Management in support of House Bill 2593. This bill will permit the Office of Emergency Management to enter into an agreement with a nonprofit organization representing sheriffs under which organization is authorized to administer a program to produce and sell outdoor recreation search and rescue cards.

Search and Rescue does not have many direct sources of revenue, but is a service most of us expect to be available, quickly and professionally, when we need it. The State Search and Rescue (SAR) coordinator at OEM regularly works with sheriff's departments statewide as well as the Oregon State Sheriff's Association (OSSA). Our SAR coordinator will be able to provide subject matter expertise as the OSSA builds the program and would be willing to serve on any grant review or technical committee, should the Association be selected to develop and administer the program.

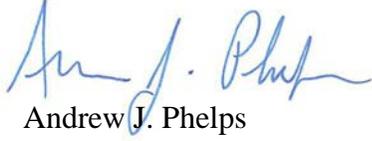
The State SAR Coordinator would assist OSSA in developing criteria for annual reporting, such as number and type of SAR cards sold, any donations received through point of sale vendors, what agencies were provided reimbursement for SAR activities and for what types of searches, and which jurisdictions received grant funding for equipment and training, how much funding was provided, and for what purpose those funds were used.

OEM has a successful track record of implementing a similar program, with the 2015 passage of House Bill 2210, commonly referred to as the First Informer bill. This legislation allowed for OEM to provide assistance and oversight of the Oregon Broadcaster's Association to develop a voluntary credential that allows broadcast engineers and technicians access to their critical infrastructure in times of emergency or disaster to ensure their television or radio networks are able to function and provide critical emergency information to the public.

If passed and signed into law, OEM would use existing resources to support this initiative.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of HB 2593. Please let me know if I can provide any additional information as the Committee considers this legislation.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrew J. Phelps". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Andrew" and last name "Phelps" clearly legible.

Andrew J. Phelps

Director