



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission

Oregon Emergency Management

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To: Representative Dacia Grayber and House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Management

From: Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission (OSSPAC)

Subject: HB 4068 Expands State emergency response systems in order to make responses more efficient and responsible with regard to adequate preparation, stockpile development, funding and exercises

Last week, January 26 marked the 322nd anniversary of the last major Cascadia earthquake and tsunami to impact our region, inviting us to reflect on how woefully unprepared the state and region are to withstand a similar event. While we acknowledge that disasters happen at the local level, it also follows that state/regional planning is essential to ensure that cities and counties have the necessary resources to prepare and protect citizens. House Bill 4068 aligns with report recommendations made by the Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission (OSSPAC) and it support efforts by local government to make communities more resilient. The OSSPAC supports HB 4068 as it addresses gaps identified in the Oregon Resilience Plan and 5-Year Progress report.

- Effective emergency response in catastrophic environments relies heavily on a need for impacted agencies to coordinate and communicate collaboratively. Establishing a standard baseline requirement for incident response training and periodic exercises, and adopting a standardized credentialing system encourages a collective approach to continuously train for disasters, and it reflects best practices set forth by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Moving the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Fund under the Office of Emergency Management is a solid first step in developing another tool for the State to support local/regional initiatives that otherwise lack funding resources to move forward.
- Public Alert & Warning is a core capability that supports effective emergency response, however, redundant platforms such as Everbridge, ShakeAlert, and federal systems (EAS, WEA & IPAWS) are needed to ensure resilience. Systems are only effective when we invest in the personnel to set up, maintain and operate them. Most local communities have notification systems in place but lack the resources to develop further than they have already. The OR-ALERT program was put in place to address the communications gap, and OSSPAC supports providing sufficient staff to support, maintain, and grow the existing program capacity.
- An all-hazards and whole community approach to identifying and purchasing critical emergency supplies will strengthen resilience of local communities throughout Oregon and it supports report recommendations from the “Mass Care and Mass Displacement after a Cascadia Subduction Zone Earthquake”¹ report published in 2018. OSSPAC supports a program that considers all hazards, incorporates broad stakeholder input and innovation to ensure that individual city and community needs are met.

We support HB 4068 because it addresses gaps that have been identified in the course of implementing the provisions set forth in HB 2927 and documented in the ORP Progress Report. Many local governments already know what is needed in their communities but lack the resources to make significant progress; others need more foundational assistance to begin identifying specific needs. This bill builds capacity at the state/regional level that will benefit cities and counties who lack the resources to make meaningful progress towards resilience goals.

cc: OSSPAC Commission Members

¹ Mass Care and Mass Displacement after a Cascadia Subduction Zone Earthquake (2018)

<https://www.oregon.gov/oem/Documents/OSSPAC-18-02%20Mass%20Care%20Final%20report.pdf>

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