



House Committee on Rules  
Oregon Fire Chiefs Association  
**HB 4087**

February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022

Thank you for the opportunity to share the Oregon Fire Chiefs Association's (OFCA) input on HB 4087. OFCA began working on this topic with key public safety stakeholders and professional media in 2021, where we were unable to reach a compromise but committed to participating in work throughout the interim.

The workgroup set out to find a solution that allowed adequate access for professional media to wildfires and natural disasters without jeopardizing public safety officials' operations, firefighting operations or putting media members in danger. The work group made significant process to achieve these goals:

- Granting the Incident Commander, or their designee, the ability to restrict all access if they deem the conditions too dangerous.
- Creating a credentialing and education program for professional media to learn safety protocols for wildfire and natural disaster sites.
- Establishing a committee within the Office of Emergency Management with representation from the fire service, law enforcement, and professional media to create and oversee the education and training program.
- Requiring Professional Media to be equipped with the proper personal protective equipment for the situation at hand.

OFCA is pleased with the progress on this issue and believe we have a good policy framework to build on. There is still an immense amount of work to be done to create the education curriculum and credentialing process and we look forward to participating in the development. We will also be observing how this framework works in reality and identify any gaps in policy or the education curriculum. This will include on the ground during wildfire – and we will be ready with recommendations to revise policy as needed.

Professional media is a key partner for the fire service in providing lifesaving information to communities when wildfires or natural disasters occur. We will continue to work with them and other public safety stakeholders to build on our work and implement a system that works for all parties involved.

Thank you for your consideration

Chief Robert Horton, Jackson County Fire District 3  
Legislative Chair, Oregon Fire Chiefs Association