

Paul L Evans
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 20



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

February 10, 2022

Senator James Manning Jr.
Chair, Senate Committee on Veterans and Emergency Management
81st Legislative Assembly
Oregon State Senate
Oregon State Capitol

Ref: SB 1517

Chair Manning, Honorable Colleagues:

Please accept this letter of support for Senate Bill 1517 (SB 1517). This measure provides the Oregon Legislature with greater involvement in meeting the needs of our people and place during catastrophic disasters/emergencies. While it is critical for the Governor to retain the ability to act swiftly during the initial stages of a large-scale catastrophe, it is equally critical that all branches of government participate in the recovery operations once a coherent response has been concluded or implemented in a “steady-state” manner.

The Legislature is an equal partner with certain and specific duties. We are the force enablers, the responsible party for ensuring all perspectives have access to decision-making. Unfortunately, some legislators (and local leaders as well) forget that structures and systems matter. A procedure exists for a reason: it distributes the workload and the respective powers of the state in times of crisis. The past several years have been challenging in part because of a lack of knowledge, and at times, a disconnect between intentions and outcomes.

During times of crisis, the Governor is the undisputed coach of the team. Our job is not to call the play or select the players on the field. Still, we are responsible, as elected legislators, for ensuring the coach and the assistant coaches (as well as the players and team personnel) follow the rules and represent our state and communities with credibility, goodwill, and effectiveness. SB 1517 represents a tool that would provide Oregonians with increased cohesion during times of increased stress. It is a helpful step along the journey to a more resilient, more responsive Oregon.

Thank you for your consideration on this measure.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul L. Evans".

Oregon House of Representatives