



February 4, 2022

2022 Oregon Legislature
House Veterans and Emergency Management Committee

Subject: HB 4086

Chair Grayber, Vice-Chairs Lewis and Meek, members of the House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Management:

Regretfully, I submit this testimony in opposition to HB 4068 due to one problematic section for county governments. Section 6, subsection 4(a) of the bill reads:

(4)(a) At least once per quarter, each county shall conduct a tabletop, scenario-based learning exercise related to emergency response. An exercise conducted by a county under this subsection must involve the majority of public or private safety agencies operating in the county.

While counties prioritize emergency response exercises to the extent possible given their constrained budgets and mandatory duties, funding for the proposed tabletop exercises is neither certain nor ongoing.

Representative Evans in the public hearing for this bill on February 3, 2022 specified that there is no penalty for noncompliance with that section and AOC appreciates that intent being put into the legislative record. If this bill is indeed aspirational, a simple fix which could put that intent into statute while preserving local funding flexibility would be to replace the “*shall*” in the above language with “*may*”.

If the will of the Committee is to keep the “*shall*” in the above section, changes could be made to Section 6, subsection 6 of the bill to mandate that the Oregon Department of Emergency Management provide grants covering the full cost of the exercises required under the section.

AOC appreciates the work of the Committee and is always available to discuss how we can elevate emergency management priorities in partnership.

Respectfully submitted,
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