

Submitter: Ed Pratt
On Behalf Of: Douglas County Fire District 2
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue
Measure: SB1068

Committee Chair Meek, Vice Chair Boguist, and committee members, I am giving written testimony in support of SB 1068.

When the laws were written to authorize fire districts, they were rural areas often with few homes and long response times. Those times are no longer the reality of our modern districts. We now respond to medical emergencies MVAs, hazardous materials calls, and fires. We often have as many homes as our nearby city's but have allowed some to not join their Fire district. Our call volume is often as big as our nearby city's but not all homes are paying into the district thus getting a free service payed for by their neighbors.

The State Fire Marshals office asked our Chief what equipment he needs to respond on conflagrations and was told we don't need equipment we need personnel. The State Fire Marshal was told the same by many chiefs throughout the state. So, now are giving grants for temporary personnel in the summer. This is a State wide problem. Allowing some not to bear the cost of fire protection but giving it to them for free. Asking for help with conflagrations from the fire districts that are short handed because they are unable to collect taxes from all structures in their districts. The cost of fire protection needs to be carried by all

This law needs updating badly. I feel this is a good step in improving our State's emergency response system.

Sincerely,
Ed Pratt

Douglas County Fire District 2 Board Members