

TO: Chair Rob Nosse, Vice Chair and Esteemed Committee Members
House Committee on Behavioral Health and Healthcare

SUBJECT: Support for HB 4081

DATE: February 6, 2024

I am transmitting this letter on behalf of the Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue (TVF&R) Board of Directors and as their designee. The TVF&R Board is in favor of HB 4081 because it evolves EMS programs and systems support at the State level with the potential to improve patient care standards and services statewide.

TVF&R protects over 547,000 residents in a 390 square mile service area that includes 11 cities and unincorporated areas in Washington, Clackamas, Yamhill, and Multnomah counties. In addition to fire protection and specialized rescue, TVF&R provides emergency medical services (EMS) and ambulance transport.

Our EMS Chief and other staff provided feedback over several years as this initiative progressed and the bill was developed, including on the most recent legislative work group. Of the many components in the bill, the following resonated most with our team for the potential to improve EMS patient care, health equity, and systems integration and collaboration:

- Replicates the State's successful trauma advisory boards model and applies it to medical emergencies that are time-sensitive, pediatric, behavioral health, and/or senior and long-term care in nature.
- Recognizes that one size does not fit all in the EMS space. The regional systems approach has the potential to improve health equity statewide while allowing for adjustments that reflect an area's unique factors and needs.
- Engages counties and local jurisdictions in the collaborative regional advisory system, which should help balance the clinical, hospital-based medical perspective with that of prehospital responders and medical directors in the field.
- Allows counties and local jurisdictions to implement objectives and emergency medical standards that best suit their service area if they are as least as or more restrictive than what the State will establish.
- Develops and manages long-needed EMS data systems that will inform performance and equity indicators throughout the State.
- Prioritizes improving Oregon's EMS workforce, recruitment and retention. Workforce shortages are a substantial challenge for TVF&R, the private transport contractors, and our neighboring public EMS providers.

Additionally, HB 4018 is consistent with our organizational vision, which calls for proactive risk reduction strategies, fast and effective response services, and collaborative partnerships. We are hopeful that HB 4081 is passed this session.

Respectfully,



Deric Weiss
Fire Chief/Executive Officer

SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY