

# ANALYSIS

## Item 11: Department of Emergency Management Next Generation Warning Systems

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**Analyst:** Steve Robbins

**Request:** Approve, retroactively, the submission of a federal grant application to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), in the amount of \$2 million for the Next Generation Warning Systems grant.

**Analysis:** The Next Generation Warning Systems (NGWS) grant is designed to support projects to identify capability gaps and implement solutions to deliver timely public warnings and emergency information while protecting critical infrastructure.

ODEM serves as the State Administrative Agency to apply for and receive this grant and will work with the OR-Alert Governance Committee and the State Interoperability Executive Committee to identify eligible projects. Likely projects would include forward-looking capabilities to disseminate emergency alerts and warnings across existing and new distribution pathways, including streaming services, sirens, giant-voice systems, satellites, internet-connected devices, and other solutions. There is no match requirement. If awarded, the agency may need to return to the legislature for additional Federal Funds expenditure limitation and an additional review of federal terms and conditions of the grant will be necessary to ensure the agency's ability to comply.

The grant was announced August 6, 2025, and the application deadline was August 15, 2025. The agency submitted the required 10-day letter requesting retroactive approval on August 7, 2025. The grant's period of performance is from October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2028.

**Recommendation:** The Legislative Fiscal Office recommends that the Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means approve the request.

**Request:** Retroactive authorization to apply for a \$2,000,000 Next Generation Warning Systems Grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

**Recommendation:** Approve the request.

**Discussion:** The Oregon Department of Emergency Management (OEM) requests retroactive authorization to apply for the Next Generation Warning Systems (NGWS) grant of \$2.0 million from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The grant would be used to provide funding for improvements to the state's emergency alerts and warnings capabilities. These initiatives will specifically support OR-Alert, the statewide alerts and warning program led by OEM, to deliver timely public emergency information and protect critical infrastructure.

Grant funds will primarily be used to purchase equipment or software to strengthen Oregon's statewide emergency information infrastructure, but OEM may need to hire an additional staff person to administer the grant. OEM was notified of this grant on August 8, 2025, and the application deadline was August 15, 2025. Due to the short window of opportunity, the 10-day letter deadline was not met, but OEM worked closely with CFO and LFO prior to submitting an application. The anticipated performance period for this grant is October 2025 through September 2028.

The NGWS grant is an existing competitive grant; however, this is the first year the state has been eligible to apply due to FEMA's revisions to the program. The OR-Alert program at OEM is currently funded via assessment, and the grant funds would add additional capabilities to the existing program if received. There is no required state match, but OEM may need to return to the legislature to request additional Federal Funds expenditure limitation if the grant is received. FEMA has agreed to exempt this grant from the 2025 standard terms and conditions around participation in statewide immigration enforcement.



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

**Oregon Department of Emergency Management**

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August 25, 2025

The Honorable Senator Kate Lieber, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Representative Tawna Sanchez, Co-Chair  
Interim Joint Committee on Ways and Means  
900 Court Street NE, H-178  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Lieber and Representative Sanchez:

## **Nature of the Request**

The Oregon Department of Emergency Management (OEM) requests retroactive authorization to apply for the Next Generation Warning Systems (NGWS) grant in the amount of \$2,000,000 from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) of the Department of Homeland Security. This grant would be used to provide funding for improvements to the state's emergency alerts and warnings capabilities.

## **Agency Action**

The mission of OEM is to lead collaborative state-wide efforts to organize and facilitate assistance for local jurisdictions in an emergency and to protect, mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies or disasters regardless of cause.

The purpose of the grant is to fund projects to identify capability gaps and implement solutions for alert and warning to deliver timely public warning and emergency information and to protect critical infrastructure. There are rapid changes in technology, cybersecurity threats, and public preferences for consuming content, and recipients of the grant will work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to explore currently available, flexible, innovative, and forward-looking capabilities to disseminate emergency alerts and warnings across existing and new distribution pathways, including streaming services, sirens, giant-voice systems, satellites, internet-connected devices, and other solutions.

Although not a new grant, previously the state was not an eligible applicant. FEMA has significantly revised the program so that states and federally recognized tribes are now the only eligible applicants.

Some key aspects of the program:

- The award would come to OEM as the State Administering Agency (SAA)
- There is no match requirement

- Period of Performance is 10/01/2025 – 09/30/2028
- Initiatives funded by the grant will support OR-Alert, our statewide alerts and warning program currently in use by all 36 counties, 5 tribal governments, and 26 state agencies.

OEM, as the state administrative agency (SAA) is the only eligible applicant for the state. The NGWS program is a competitive grant program intended to provide federal funding for enhanced alert and warning capabilities. OEM will work with the OR-Alert Governance Committee and the State Interoperability Executive Committee to identify eligible projects.

The 2025 NGWS Grant was announced August 6, 2025, with an application deadline of August 15, 2025. This grant is 100% funded by FEMA and has no match requirement. If OEM receives an award, we may need to request additional Federal Funds expenditure limitation to implement the grant.

### **Action Requested**

OEM respectfully requests retroactive authorization to apply for the NGWS grant.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Best regards,



Erin McMahon  
Director

\*\*Revised per DAS' feedback 08.27.2025