



Jackson County **FIRE DISTRICT 3**



March 20, 2025

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Javadi and Nelson, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Fire District 3, I strongly urge the passage of House Bill 3572, the EMS Modernization Bill. Oregon's EMS system is at a critical juncture, and without decisive action and support, the ability to provide timely, life-saving care, particularly in rural areas, will continue to deteriorate.

Fire District 3 serves a growing and diverse community in Southern Oregon, responding to a broad range of emergencies. Like many agencies across Oregon, our region is experiencing increasing difficulty in recruiting and retaining paramedics and EMTs. While EMS professionals continue to graduate from training programs, fewer are choosing pre-hospital emergency care, instead opting for positions in hospital settings or private healthcare companies. This staffing crisis has led to increased response times and added strain on our workforce, which is unsustainable.

The EMS Omnibus Bill represents a critical investment in our state's EMS system by:

- **Providing funding for immediate EMS workforce relief**, with a focus on rural areas where coverage gaps threaten public safety.
- **Establishing an EMS Mobilization Plan**, administered by the State Fire Marshal, to ensure a coordinated, efficient response to large-scale emergencies—just as is done for fire resources during conflagrations.
- **Developing a 10-year strategic EMS plan**, with date-specific, measurable goals addressing workforce shortages, funding, community expectations, data management, governance, and service standards for both rural and metropolitan areas.
- **Deploying a reliable mobilization for EMS resources**, overseen by the Department of the State Fire Marshal modeled after the already successful wildfire mobilization.
- **Ensuring built-in accountability measures**, including reporting requirements and oversight, to evaluate progress and hold the plan accountable for delivering meaningful improvements.

Oregon's EMS system is failing under the weight of workforce shortages, funding instability, and increasing service demands. This bill offers both short-term relief and a long-term roadmap to ensure EMS providers across the state have the resources and support needed to serve their communities effectively.

I urge lawmakers to pass this legislation and send a clear message that Oregon prioritizes the health and safety of its residents by supporting those who provide emergency medical care.

Sincerely,



Mike Hussey, Fire Chief

Jackson County Fire District 3 & 5