

**Testimony of Kim Stout, Board President
on Behalf of Jefferson County Fire & EMS Board of Directors**

In Support of Capital Fund Request for Jefferson County Fire and EMS

**To the Oregon State Legislature
Ways and Means Committee**

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

My name is Kim Stout. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Board of Directors for Jefferson County Fire & EMS. As a representative of the board, I am writing in support of Jefferson County Fire and EMS's request for Capital Funding of \$1.9 million to assist in the expansion and remodel of its existing fire station.

The current fire station was built over 33 years ago as primarily a volunteer station with limited housing space. In July of 2022, the fire district combined operations with the Jefferson County Emergency Medical Services District. This enabled our organization to improve our efficiencies, decrease response times, and establish a shift schedule that provides 24/7 coverage to our community. We are pleased that this change has improved the safety and well-being of the citizens in our community by providing higher quality emergency services when they need them most. However, the additional personnel at one location has escalated the need for expansion of our current station.

The current fire station facilities are insufficient in meeting the needs of our current workforce and growing community. Our current staff is 60% male and 40% female. This contributes to the need for additional sleeping space and updated bathroom facilities to accommodate both male and female personnel. In addition to the living facilities, the chief and his staff have been having to creatively find ways to share needed office space with space originally designed and essential for other meeting and training purposes. This is not sustainable in the long term. The expansion and remodel will provide the necessary space to ensure that Fire and EMS can continue to serve our community effectively and efficiently.

The voters of Jefferson County approved a bond this past May of 2024 for improving our Madras and Culver fire stations and equipment, but when it comes to improving and keeping up with adequately serving our growing community, our capital needs are many while our revenue sources are limited. The building improvements have begun, and the organization is asking for your help in achieving our goals to better support our staff and to better serve our people in the community and service area.

As a board, we understand concerns about the cost of such a project in addition to other needs across the state in which you serve. The funding assistance will greatly help in improving an essential service to the residents of this area of Oregon. We urge you to consider this Capital Funding request and support this important investment in our community's safety now and into the future. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kim Stout, President
Dustin Miller, Secretary

Rob Galyen, Vice President
Chris Dupont, Director

Ryan Boyle, Director