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KEIZER FIRE DISTRICT

February 3, 2026

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

My name is Ryan Russell, Fire Chief of the Keizer Fire District, and I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 4156.

Keizer Fire District serves a concentrated but busy area just over 10 square miles, protecting a community of more than 40,000 residents. In 2025, our crews responded to nearly 7,100 calls, most of them medical in nature. Because of our location and automatic aid agreements, our role extends beyond city limits, we are routinely part of the EMS and fire response system for the capital region, not just Keizer.

GEMT funding enables us to provide emergency medical care by supporting ambulance costs, personnel training, and equipment maintenance. Without this funding, sustaining current EMS service levels would require shifting resources from other taxpayer-funded priorities.

If GEMT funding were interrupted, even for a short period, we would have to react quickly. Equipment replacement would be delayed, training scaled back, and staffing carefully reevaluated. A permanent loss of GEMT would force much more serious decisions that would inevitably affect service delivery and regional response capability.

HB 4156 does not change the current GEMT program or add new state spending. If federal policy remains the same, this bill has no effect. What it does is avoid disruption by ensuring Oregon has a clear path forward should federal requirements change, protecting EMS agencies and the communities that rely on them.

Thank you for your time and for the work you do on behalf of public safety. I respectfully ask for your support of HB 4156.

Sincerely,

Ryan Russell
Fire Chief
Keizer Fire District