

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

My name is Deric Weiss, and I am honored to serve as Fire Chief of Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue. I am writing in support of House Bill 4156.

Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue is the largest fire district in the state, serving a population of more than 552,000 people across 11 cities and portions of four counties. In 2025, we responded to over 60,000 calls for service, with more than 80 percent of those calls including TVF&R crews providing some type of medical care, many involving transporting patients to various healthcare facilities in the region.

At TVF&R, we provide fire-based ambulance transport services in specific portions of our service area. For example, in Newberg, we are the primary provider of transport services, while in West Linn and Wilsonville, we subcontract with American Medical Response. In other parts of our service area, during periods of increased call volume, we ensure patients are transported to emergency rooms by deploying our ambulances as needed.

Like many public agencies that provide ambulance transport services, we rely on Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (GEMT) funding to help offset our operational costs. Each year, we receive approximately \$600,000 in GEMT reimbursement, which is crucial to offsetting the costs of our public transport services. Any disruption to this funding would create unnecessary challenges and burdens on our system.

I want to emphasize that HB 4156 will not increase state costs. Instead, it will establish a mechanism to continue the reimbursement process if the federal government changes the current funding model. If the federal government maintains the existing funding model, there will be no changes. However, we must be proactive, as a disruption to GEMT reimbursement could pose significant challenges for some agencies and be catastrophic for others across the state that provide fire-based ambulance transport services.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this important matter — I urge you to support House Bill 4156.

Sincerely,



Deric Weiss  
Fire Chief