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CHIEF OF DISTRICT
Kyle McMann

February 3, 2026

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

My name is Kyle McMann, and I am the Fire Chief for Marion County Fire District 1, a special district serving the community around the cities of Salem & Keizer. We serve 59,000 Oregonians in an area of over 88 square miles, from 8 Fire & EMS Stations with 70 career personnel and 38 volunteer Fire & EMS Personnel. In 2025 we responded to 11,000 calls and provided 5,500 transports for ill and injured patients to the hospital. My testimony is in support of HB 4156 which is a critical measure to ensure the continued stability and sustainability of Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (GEMT) funding for fire-based emergency medical service providers across Oregon. As a fire district that delivers essential EMS and ambulance services to our community, Marion County Fire District relies on GEMT supplemental reimbursement.

These funds directly support frontline services, including staffing, training, equipment, and the ability to maintain rapid emergency response times. Without a stable and well-structured GEMT program, many fire districts—particularly those serving rural and underserved populations—would face significant financial strain that could impact service levels and patient care. Since the inception of the GEMT Program, MCFD 1 has received over \$3 million in supplemental payments, critical to covering the costs of EMS service. Currently, we receive about \$750,000 annually, which, if lost, would cause the layoff of 4-6 Paramedics and the loss of 1 Advanced Life Support Ambulance as current funding reserves are not sufficient to cover this deficit compounded by the other tax funding challenges the State and local governments are experiencing along with increasing personnel costs.

HB 4156 provides needed clarity and improvements to the administration of GEMT reimbursement, helping ensure that local EMS providers can continue to participate effectively in the program. The bill supports transparency, compliance, and long-term viability of GEMT while recognizing the essential role that fire districts play in Oregon's emergency medical response system. The GEMT program allows local EMS agencies to leverage federal matching funds without increasing costs to the state's General Fund or to taxpayers. Nothing currently will change should the federal government continue to allow the current funding model.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony, thank you Committee for your time and for your continued support of Oregon's emergency medical service providers. On behalf of Marion County Fire District, I respectfully urge the committee to support HB 4156 and advance this legislation. Doing so will help protect access to emergency medical services, strengthen local public safety agencies, and ensure that Medicaid patients continue to receive timely, high-quality emergency care.

Sincerely,

Kyle G. McMann
Kyle McMann
Fire Chief