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## Legislative Support for HB 4156

February 5, 2026

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Diehl and Nelson, and Members of the House Health Care Committee:

Mid Columbia Fire and Rescue is proud to serve the residents of The Dalles and surrounding communities in Wasco County, Oregon. Our agency responds to thousands of emergency calls each year, providing critical fire protection and emergency medical services across a diverse and geographically challenging region. As a department committed to excellence, we strive to meet the unique needs of both rural and suburban populations within our service area.

The Ground Emergency Medical Transport (GEMT) funding has proven invaluable for our department. This federal support has enabled us to maintain adequate staffing levels and invest in essential equipment, directly enhancing our ability to respond to emergencies swiftly and effectively. Thanks to GEMT, we have improved training programs and can consistently provide high-quality care to our patients.

If GEMT funding were lost, our agency would face significant challenges. Reduced financial resources could force difficult decisions regarding staffing, equipment upgrades, and training opportunities, ultimately impacting the level of service we provide to our community. The loss of these funds would jeopardize our ability to maintain current response capabilities and ensure public safety.

It is important to clarify that continued federal support for GEMT simply preserves the existing system; HB 4156 does not require any additional state funding. Maintaining this federal partnership ensures stability for local agencies like ours and allows us to continue offering essential services without new financial burdens for Oregon.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We respectfully urge your support for HB 4156 to safeguard the quality and reliability of emergency medical services for our community.

Sincerely,

David Jensen  
Fire Chief  
Mid-Columbia Fire and Rescue