



To: Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden and Members of the Committee

From: Amy Hanifan, Oregon Fire Chief's Association 1st Vice President

Date: February 23rd, 2026

Re: HB 4053

On behalf of the Oregon Fire Chief's Association (OFCA) and the Special Districts Association of Oregon Fire and Emergency Medical Services Chapter, I encourage the passage of HB 4053.

Over the last several years you've learned from emergency responders that the state of emergency medical services is challenging. Funding, recruitment, and retention continue to strain agencies from large to small. We've had some successes and on-going efforts, yet there is more work to be done.

The introduction of EMS Modernization with HB 4081 provided a framework to begin addressing some of the foundational needs regarding EMS in Oregon. As the efforts of that bill have unfolded, there have been a few technical pieces which have been identified as needing attention. One technical piece that we would look forward to is regarding the education of EMS providers. Over the last couple years there have been challenges with students who participate in out-of-state EMS programs and the ability to perform their clinical internship in Oregon. Some agencies choose to send their crews to these programs for a variety of reasons, to train providers towards higher education up to and including as paramedics. We've had to work through red tape with the Higher Education Coordinating Commission and in coordination with the Oregon Health Authority to gain permission for these students to perform their internship in Oregon. Some of the delays have caused months of waiting. When it comes to our workforce issues, these delays are costly both financially and more importantly for those who are doing the work. It's refreshing to see that there is language to address those challenges within HB 4053.

In addition to these technical fixes, the framework to create a State EMS Fund is well needed. Certainly, we understand that there may not be funds currently available to allocate. Having the fund established and available for any funds that may need a place to be placed would be a great starting point for future opportunities, whether that be from private donations or grant monies.

Please support HB 4053 and the continued improvements towards emergency medical services in Oregon.

Amy Hanifan
OFCA 1st Vice-president