

Testimony To The House Revenue Committee

By: Larry L. Hatch
Washington County 9-1-1 Assistant Director
March 14, 2013
Oregon APCO/NENA Legislative Chair

Chair Barnhart, Committee Members;

I am here today representing Oregon APCO/NENA and the people who staff 9-1-1 centers across the State of Oregon. Our membership supports the passage of bills before you today that deal with the extension of the 9-1-1 telephone tax and the inclusion of pre-paid wireless phones under the 9-1-1 tax.

You have multiple bills before you today each with different approach to moving these issues forward. Two House Bills, 2035 & 2496, seek to extend the current telephone tax but for different periods of time. We understand the Legislatures desire to revisit taxes to ensure they are still needed. Since the tax was enacted in 1981 we have been coming to the Legislature proving the need for the funding and the need to extend the tax. HB 2035 would extend the tax until 2026 and HB 2496 extends the tax to 2020. Extending the tax is the most important action and we would prefer the longer extension set forth in HB 2035,

Three House Bills, 2036, 2415, & 2454 will bring pre-paid wireless under the current 9-1-1 tax. There has been a market shift away from contracted wireless service to pre-paid wireless service. With that shift we have seen financial support from the 9-1-1 tax to our local 9-1-1 centers decline. In Washington County our 9-1-1 centers support from the 9-1-1 tax declined from 27% in 2009 to 22% of budget in 2013. Less revenue from the 9-1-1 tax means our police and fire departments have to pay more for the support of our operation. We urge you to support the bill that would deliver the most funding to the local 9-1-1 center by including pre-paid wireless under the 9-1-1 tax.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important subject I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.

Baker County Consolidated Dispatch

3410 K Street Baker City, OR 97814

(541) 523-6415 Fax (541) 523-9531



Sheila Thompson, Director

House Revenue Committee:

On behalf of the Baker County Consolidated 911 Dispatch (BCCD), I am asking your support to reauthorize the 9-1-1 Telephone Tax. BCCD provides 9-1-1 call answering and dispatch services to all of the police, fire and medical responders, for the citizens of Baker County, along with the seasonal visitors to Baker County.

The 9-1-1 Tax has provided critical funding to support and implement 9-1-1 services to all of Oregon. In today's world, Oregon's 9-1-1 Centers are facing challenges of the rapidly changing technology. The various ways in which to access 9-1-1 either today or in the future, all present their own unique set of issues; VoIP (Voice over internet Protocol), devices which will allow people to dial 9-1-1 from their PDA, pagers, etc, all with the expectation that their call will be routed to the correct 9-1-1 center, with their location information attached; however, today, this is not the case. As more and more technology emerges, it is critical that we are able to keep up for the next several years to implement and support the necessary equipment required to perform these essential tasks.

Yearly, Baker County receives about 30 percent of its annual operating budget from this tax, which is estimated to be approximately 300,000 dollars this year. The need for the service that this tax provides will not go away. People will always need emergency services.

The 9-1-1 program has demonstrated its value, particularly in rural Oregon. On behalf of the County of Baker, I ask for your support in removing the sunset on this tax.

The County of Baker joins Oregon APCO/NENA and the Public Safety Answering Points across Oregon in support of legislation to require the prepaid wireless phone industry to support the Oregon 9-1-1 Program.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Thompson Baker County Consolidated 911 Dispatch, Director 3410 K Street Baker City, OR 97814 541,523,6415



March 12, 2013

Representative Phil Barnhart House Revenue Committee Chair 900 Court St. NE, H-383 Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support of House Bills 2035 and 2496

Dear Representative Barnhart:

It is my pleasure to strongly communicate my support to several House Bills I believe necessary to secure our citizens' safety and to shore up a 911 system that has been stretched dangerously thin. First, HB 2035 and HB 2496 extends the current Emergency Communications Tax (the "9-1-1 Tax"). This emergency communications funding is vital to public safety and should be continued. HB 2035 extends the tax to year 2026, and HB 2496 extends to year 2020 - I support either and leave your good judgment to determine which is most appropriate.

Second, there are several bills that seek to ensure that pre-paid cellular devices are included in the Emergency Communications Tax, like funds that are collected from all other wireless phones and hard-line phones. HB 2036 is the most common sense approach to leveling the playing field on this front that ensures collection of those funds begin immediately in order to support the 9-1-1 system that is being utilized on behalf of those consumers on a daily basis. I urge your important work to pass this bill that will strengthen the 9-1-1 system via extension and clarification of the Emergency Communications Tax for the benefit and safety of all Oregonians. HB 2415 is essentially the same as HB 2036, though with an effective date of 1/1/15, and therefore, much less preferred. In my opinion, HB 2454 is simply too costly to administer and would make the objective to strengthen 9-1-1 system unachievable, or much less effective.

Adequately funded 911 services are an integral part of an effective public safety system. In a growing county, funding has not kept up with needs. The resulting stress on the 911 system is detrimental to individuals in need of those services. Oregon is one of seven states that decided to divert 9-1-1 funds in order to pay for budget shortfalls. 9-1-1 collected funds should be dedicated solely to the 9-1-1 system for the protection of the citizens in emergency who need help immediately. To continue to diminish Emergency Communications Tax Funds away from their stated purpose will create an increasingly unstable 9-1-1 system at the local level, and may ultimately jeopardize the integrity of the entire emergency response system.

Sincerely,

Pat Garrett Washington County Sheriff



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

March 12, 2013

Public Services Building 2051 Kaen Road | Oregon City, OR 97045

Representative Phil Barnhart, Chair House Committee on Revenue 900 Court Street NE, Room 143 Salem, OR 97301

RE: Letter in Support of 9-1-1 Tax Reauthorization (HB 2035/2496) and Pre-Paid Wireless (HB 2036/2415) Legislation

Dear Chair Barnhart & Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners, I thank you for the opportunity to express our support of reauthorizing the 9-1-1 telephone tax and closing the loophole on tax collections from prepaid wireless devices. These bills are critical to the stable and adequate funding of the Clackamas County Department of Communications, also known as C-COM, which provides 9-1-1 call taking and dispatch services to six law enforcement agencies and nine fire districts and departments.

Clackamas County supports reauthorization of the emergency communications tax, which is an essential component of the overall funding for our statewide 9-1-1 system. It provides key financial support for call centers, dispatchers, communication equipment and other costs related to maintaining the state's emergency response system. Scheduled to sunset on December 31, 2013, the tax imposes a \$0.75 per month charge on any telephone circuit capable of accessing the 9-1-1 network. In Fiscal Year 2012-13, the tax will provide \$1.441 million in revenue to C-COM, constituting over 21% of their annual budget.

Additionally, Clackamas County supports legislation to require payment of the 9-1-1 tax by users of prepaid wireless devices. Currently, prepaid wireless users do not pay the same tax levied on landline and traditional wireless users to support the 9-1-1 emergency system. The number of prepaid wireless customers is growing nationally and is now estimated to constitute 20 percent of the wireless market, costing the Oregon emergency system millions of dollars a year. Requiring prepaid wireless users to pay for 9-1-1 services just like all other wireless customers will restore equity to the funding system and provide ongoing revenue stability for local emergency operations centers.

We strongly urge your support of reauthorizing the 9-1-1 tax and closing the loophole on prepaid wireless devices. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Ludlow, Chaff

On behalf of the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners



March 12, 2013

CITY OF LAKE OSWEGO
POLICE DEPARTMENT
FIRE DEPARTMENT

380 A Avenue PO Box 369 Lake Oswego, OR 97034

> 503-635-0250 www.ci.oswego.or.us

House Revenue Committee
Representative Phil Barnhart – Chair
Representative Jules Balley – Vice Chair
Representative Vicki Berger – Vice Chair
Representative Jason Conger
Representative John Davis
Representative Sara Gelser
Representative Tobias Read
Representative Jessica Vega Pederson
Representative Cliff Bentz
900 Court St. NE, Room 143
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support for 9-1-1 Excise Tax Extension and Equitable Collection

Dear Honorable Members of the House Revenue Committee:

The City of Lake Oswego would like to urge support of legislation that continues the 9-1-1 telephone tax. While the 9-1-1 telephone tax is just one piece of the revenue stream for our public safety answering point (PSAP) it is critical to our operations. As you consider several bills, the goal needs to be the extension of the tax and the collection of the tax from all devices "with access to the 9-1-1 emergency reporting system." Just as the wireless industry's business model has adapted from contract services to prepaid services, so must the collection of the 9-1-1 excise tax. With the increasing number of pre-paid wireless phones, it is critical that these subscribers contribute to the 9-1-1 system like all other wireless phones and land line phones.

We support the passage of the bill that will not only allow for the necessary upgrades in technology to keep up with the expectations of the public, but also bring the most revenue to local government for the operation of their PSAP. Every dollar of funding is critical to this mission.

The City of Lake Oswego urges your support,

Sincerely,

¢c;

Chief Don Johnson Police Department

PORTURES

Sincerely,

Chief Ed Wilson Fire Department

Tom Coffee, City Manager Christine Kirk, Public Affairs Manager

Lane County Fire Defense Board



March 12, 2013

Oregon APCO/NENA Legislative Committee

Regarding: Support of Legislation for the inclusion of Pre-Paid cell phone users and the extension of the 9-1-1 tax.

The Lane County Fire Defense Board would like to offer this letter in support of your efforts to require the prepaid wireless phone industry to support the Oregon 9-1-1 Program and the extension of the 9-1-1 tax.

We recognize the 9-1-1 telephone tax is an essential component of the overall funding of our state-wide system. As wireless customers appear to choose prepaid phones more frequently, the current inability to collect the tax from the prepaid wireless phone industry has deprived the Oregon 9-1-1 Program of needed financial support of the system.

As public safety officials we know the 9-1-1 system is an integral part of our own systems. Funding issues within the Oregon 9-1-1 Program have a direct effect on the citizens we all serve.

We are also aware of much needed advances in technology, in order to allow 9-1-1 Centers across our state to receive text messaging, video and pictures as expected by our citizens. Without sufficient funding, the ability to provide the service level already expected by our citizens will be severely compromised.

The Lane County Fire Defense Board supports the legislation to require the prepaid wireless phone industry to support the Oregon 9-1-1 Program and the extension of the 9-1-1 tax.

Sincerely,

Chief Chad Minter, Chair Lane County Fire Defense Board Coburg Rural Fire District

coburgfire@nu-world.com

Hood River County Sheriff's Office

Matthew T. English, Sheriff



March 11, 2013

Honorable Legislators,

As a Sheriff, the viability of the 911 system is an extremely important component to emergency services and the citizens and visitors we are responsible for. Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP's), are the first line of public protection, tasked not only with obtaining vital public safety information but ensuring that the resources needed are dispatched as quickly and efficiently as possible. As responsible citizens and public safety officials, we can not stand idly by and allow the 911 system to be eroded away as many of the other pieces of our emergency service infrastructure have been allowed to do in recent years.

It is imperative that we extend the 911 telephone tax and collect revenue from the ever increasing numbers of pre-paid cell phone users to support our PSAP's. 911 is essential to public safety and it is critical that funding be sustained to ensure continuing and uninterrupted service to the citizens we protect.

Respectfully,

Matt English

Sheriff

Hood River County



Jackson County Sheriff's Office

Michael Winters
Sheriff

5179 Crater Lake Highway Central Point, OR 97501 Phone: 541-774-6818 Fax: 541-774-6774 winterms@jacksoncounty.org

TTY: 541-774-6771 www.jacksoncounty.org

March 12, 2013

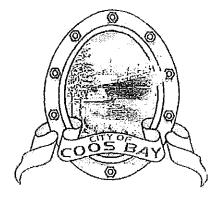
RE: 911 Support

On behalf of the Jackson County Sheriff's Office, I would like to submit this letter in support of 9-1-1 in Oregon. In Jackson County, Emergency Communications of Southern Oregon (ECSO) is the only Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP). The 9-1-1 tax covers only 21% of the budget, with the remaining funding coming from local government. With the economy as it is, fire and police agencies have already had to deal with decreasing budgets while still trying to properly fund our PSAP. Funding for our 9-1-1 Centers in Oregon is imperative and collection of money from prepaid phones is past due. I am submitting this letter in support of the extension of the 9-1-1 tax, which is critical to our operation. I would also like to stress my support of the collection of the 9-1-1 tax on prepaid cell phones to contribute the same way all other wireless phones and land line phones do.

In regards to the prepaid bills, I am in support of the passage of the bill that will bring the most revenue to local government for the operation of our PSAP.

Sincerely,

Michael S. Winters Sheriff



City of Coos Bay

Police Department

500 Central Avenue, Coos Bay, Oregon 97420-8914
Phone (541) 269-8911 Fax (541) 269-5788
Chief Gary McCullough
http://www.coosbay.org

March 13, 2013

To the Honorable Members of the House Revenue Committee,

My name is Gary L. McCullough and I am the Chief of Police for the Coos Bay Police Department. The North Coos 911 answering center is housed and managed at our facility at 500 Central Ave in Coos Bay Oregon. We currently have 10 full time Emergency Medical Dispatch positions that additionally dispatch for several law enforcement as well as many fire departments. It is critical to our operation that we continue to receive the Emergency Communications Tax funds that are supplied through the collection of 911 phone taxes.

Oregon's 9-1-1 system provides the vital link between citizens needing help in time of crisis, and their emergency responders. That system is funded by the Emergency Communications Tax, which is due to expire at the end of this year.

It is imperative that Oregon extend the current 9-1-1 Tax at the \$.75 per month level, which is assessed currently.

It should be clarified that pre-paid wireless devices are included in the Emergency Communications tax. The Oregon Department of Justice, Legislative Counsel and the Oregon Department of Revenue concur that pre-paid cellular devices do fall under this statute, and collection of those funds should begin immediately in order to support the 9-1-1 system that is available to those consumers on a daily basis.

Wireless telephone use has increased dramatically in the last decade, and individuals in need have grown to rely on the emergency system in greater numbers. This reliance has placed a stress on the system, and funding has not kept up with these increased demands. So, it is also important that all 9-1-1 collected funds be dedicated solely to the 9-1-1 system for the protection of the citizens of this State. Diverting Emergency Communications Tax Funds away from their stated purpose may ultimately jeopardize the integrity of the entire emergency response system.

Please support the measures that extend our 9-1-1 tax, and insure the fair inclusion of pre-paid wireless devices in the collection of these funds in order to strengthen our 91-1-1 system, for the benefit and safety of all Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Gary L. McCullough Chief of Police

Coos Bay Police Department

Larry Hatch

From:

Theresa Thaxton <tthaxton911@co.coos.or.us>

Sent:

Wednesday, March 13, 2013 1:13 PM

To:

Larry Hatch

Subject:

Emergency Communications Tax

Honorable Members of the House Revenue Committee,

My name is Theresa Thaxton and I represent The Coos County Sheriff's Office.

Oregon's 9-1-1 system provides the vital link between citizens needing help in time of crisis, and their emergency responders. That system is funded by the Emergency Communications Tax, which is due to expire at the end of this year.

It is imperative that Oregon extend the current 9-1-1 Tax at the \$.75 per month level, which is assessed currently.

It should be clarified that pre-paid wireless devices are included in the Emergency Communications tax. The Oregon Department of Justice, Legislative Counsel and the Oregon Department of Revenue concur that pre-paid cellular devices do fall under this statute, and collection of those funds should begin immediately in order to support the 9-1-1 system that is available to those consumers on a daily basis.

Wireless telephone use has increased dramatically in the last decade, and individuals in need have grown to rely on the emergency system in greater numbers. This reliance has placed a stress on the system, and funding has not kept up with these increased demands. So, it is also important that all 9-1-1 collected funds be dedicated solely to the 9-1-1 system for the protection of the citizens of this State. Diverting Emergency Communications Tax Funds away from their stated purpose may ultimately jeopardize the integrity of the entire emergency response system.

Please support the measures that extend our 9-1-1 tax, and insure the fair inclusion of pre-paid wireless devices in the collection of these funds in order to strengthen our 91-1-1 system, for the benefit and safety of all Oregonians.

Theresa Thaxton/Communication's Supervisor Coos County Sheriff's Office Coquille, OR 97423 541-396-2106

Jackson County Fire District 3

8383 Agate Road White City, OR 97503-1075 (541) 826-7100 (Office) (541) 826-4566 (Fax) www.jcfd3.com



March 13, 2013

The House Revenue Committee
Representative Phil Barnhart – Chair
Representative Jules Bailey – Vice Chair
Representative Vickl Berger – Vice Chair
Representative Jason Conger
Representative John Davis
Representative Sarah Gelser
Representative Tobias Read
Representative Jessica Vega Pederson
Representative Cliff Bentz

Dear Honorable Members of the House Revenue Committee,

On behalf of Jackson County Fire District 3, I would like to submit this letter in support of 9-1-1 in Oregon.

In Jackson County, ECSO is the single Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) not only for our county, but also for Crater Lake National Park. The 9-1-1 tax covers only 21% of our budget, with the remaining funds coming from local government.

With the economy as it is, fire and police agencies have already had to deal with decreasing budgets while trying to properly fund our PSAP. Funding for our 9-1-1 Centers in Oregon is imperative and collection of money from prepaid phones is past due.

I am submitting this letter in support of the extension of the 9-1-1 tax to maintain the current 9-1-1 tax collection which is critical to our operation.

I would also like to stress my support of the collection of the 9-1-1 tax on prepaid cell phones to contribute the same way all other wireless phones and land line phones do. With the shift away from contracted wireless service to prepaid, and without a bill allowing collection of the 9-1-1 tax on prepaid, we will continue to see a decline in the collection of the very tax designed to help fund 9-1-1 in Oregon.

In regards to the prepaid bills, I am in support of the passage of the bill that will bring the most revenue to local government for the operation of our PSAP.

Thank you,

Dan Petersen, Fire Chief

Jackson County Fire District 3



325 Willow View Drive -:- P.O. Box 159 Heppner, OR 97836 Phone: (541)676-5317 Fax: (541)676-5577

Kenneth W. Matlack, Sheriff Steven L. Myren, Undersheriff

March 13, 2013

RE: 911 Support

On behalf of the Morrow County Sheriff's office, I would like to submit this letter in support of 9-1-1 in Oregon. In Morrow County, Morrow County 911 is the only Public Safety Answering point (PSAP). The 9-1-1 tax covers only 8% of the Sheriff's Office budget, with the remaining funding coming from local government. With the economy as it is, fire and police agencies have already had to deal with decreasing budgets while still trying to properly fund our PSAP. Funding for our 9-1-1 Centers in Oregon is imperative and collection of money from prepaid phones is past due. I am submitting this letter in support of the extension of the 9-1-1 tax, which is critical to our operation. I would also like to stress my support of the collection of the 9-1-1 tax on prepaid cell phones to contribute the same way all other wireless phones and landlines already do. In regards to the prepaid bills, I am in support of the passage of the bill that will bring the most revenue to local government for the operation of our PSAP.

Sincerely,

Kenneth W. Matlack, Sheriff

Henneth, W. matlack

Tillamook County



Board of Commissioners
Mark Labhart. Bill Baertlein. Tim Josi
201 Laurel Avenue
Tillamook, Oregon 97141
Phone 503-842-3403
Fax 503-842-1384
TTY Oregon Relay Service

Land of Cheese, Trees and Ocean Breeze

March 13, 2013

Representative Phil Barnhart, Chair Members of the Revenue Committee

RE: 9-1-1 Telephone Tax

Chair Barnhart, Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Tillamook County Emergency Communications District we are asking for your support to reauthorize the 9-1-1 Telephone Tax.

For over 30 years, the 9-1-1 Telephone Tax has provided critical funding to support and implement 9-1-1 services to all of Oregon. In today's world, Oregon's 9-1-1 Centers are facing challenges attempting to catch up to the rapidly changing methods of reporting emergencies. As more and more technology emerges, it is critical that we are able to keep pace with these challenges for the safety and welfare of all. Reauthorizing this tax will ensure funding for the next several years to implement and support the necessary equipment required to perform these essential tasks.

Tillamook County Emergency Communications District provides 9-1-1 call answering and dispatch services to all of the police, fire and medical responders that serve approximately 25,000 residents, along with the visitors to Tillamook County. US Highway 101 and Oregon State Highway 6 are both major transportation arteries and carry a significant amount of truck and personal vehicle traffic through our county on a daily basis. Tillamook County has a large wilderness area which draws thousands of visitors each year significantly impacting our 9-1-1 call volumes.

Yearly, Tillamook County Emergency Communications District receives approximately 25% of its annual operating budget from this tax, which is estimated to be approximately \$250,000 this year. On average, Tillamook County Emergency Communications District answers approximately 76,000 telephone calls a year. In 2012, we dispatched nearly 50,000 police, fire and medical calls for service; however, call volumes along with the number of cell phones in use, continue to grow along with the population. The need for the service that this tax provides will not go away. People will always need emergency services.

Representative Phil Chair Barnhart, Chair Members of the Revenue Committee March 13, 2013 Page 2

On behalf of the Tillamook County Emergency Communications District, we urge you to support the reauthorization of this tax. The 9-1-1 program has demonstrated its value, particularly in rural Oregon and its assistance to local governments year after year. Each year, with the tourist population, our call volume has increased.

The continuation of the 9-1-1 Telephone Tax is critical to the operations of the Public Safety Answering Points in Oregon.

Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR TILLAMOOK COUNTY, OREGON

Mark Labhart, Chairperson

Bill Baertlein, Vice Chairperson

Tim Josi, Commissioner

G/LETTERS\SUPPORT\9-1-1 Bills 2013.doc



Wasco County

SHERIFF

511 Washington Street, Suite 102 The Dalles, Oregon 97058 Phone (541) 506-2580 Fax (541) 506-2581



March 12,2013

Chair, Members of House Revenue Committee:

On behalf of the Wasco County Communications Agency/911 (WCCA), I am asking your support to require collection of the 9-1-1 Telephone Tax from pre-paid wireless providers. WCCA provides 9-1-1 call answering and dispatch services to all of the police, fire and medical responders, the 24,500 residents, along with the visitors to Wasco County. On average, WCCA answers approximately 286 telephone calls a day, or over 104,390 a year.

In the past several years, it appears that wireless customers are changing from contract plans and appear to choose pre-paid plans. Out of the 286 calls a day WCCA processes, we estimate that 70 percent are made from cellular telephones. Out of those, based on national statistics, 25 percent of those calls come from pre-paid cell phones.

For over 30 years, the 9-1-1 Telephone Tax has provided critical funding to support and implement 9-1-1 services to all of Oregon. ORS 403.200 requires each circuit capable of accessing 9-1-1 to pay a tax of 75 cents per month. However, since the inception of pre-paid wireless, some of those companies providing this service are not collecting this tax in Oregon. This lack of support by the pre-paid wireless phone industry has deprived the Oregon 9-1-1 Program of millions of dollars. This is not a new tax, it simply brings equity to the market and requires prepaid phones to support the 9-1-1 system like wireline and contract wireless providers have been doing for years.

In today's world, Oregon's 9-1-1 Centers face challenges attempting to catch up to the rapidly changing 9-1-1 call answering technology. The various ways in which to access 9-1-1 either today or in the future, all present their own unique set of issues; VoIP (Voice over internet Protocol), devices which will allow people to dial 9-1-1 from their PDA, pagers, etc, all with the expectation that their call will be routed to the correct 9-1-1 center, with their location information attached; however, today, this is not the case. As more and more technology, referred to as next generation or "Next Gen" emerges, it is critical that we are able to keep pace with these challenges for the safety and welfare of all. With a lack of funding, the ability to provide the service level already expected by our citizens is severely compromised. Collecting this tax from the pre-pald providers will help continue funding the implementation and support the necessary equipment required to perform these essential tasks.

The Wasco County 911 Center, Wasco County Sheriff, Mid Columbia Fire and Rescue joins Oregon APCO/NENA and the Public Safety Answering Points throughout Oregon in support of legislation to require the prepaid wireless phone industry to support the Oregon 9-1-1 Program.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Pesicka, Operations Manager

---Wasco County 911