



Testimony in Support: HB 2449
House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness
March 7, 2019 – 3:00 pm
Genoa Ingram

The Oregon Fire District Directors Association (OFDDA), formed in 1950, serves the elected public officials of over 200 Fire Protection Districts throughout Oregon, all Special Districts formed under ORS Chapter 478. The five-member governing boards, who serve without compensation, are responsible for the financial and management oversight of the Districts.

OFDDA has a long history of support for Oregon's 9-1-1 system, including the implementation of Next Generation technology. The Association is sensitive to the continuing evolution of technology such as wireless, and Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) which, along with an increasing population, place additional burdens on the 9-1-1 system, increasing call volume to nearly twenty percent. Resources simply have not kept up with the need.

Oregon's elected fire officials take the safety of our citizens very seriously. OFDDA strongly supports the increase in the 9-1-1 surcharge from .75 to \$1.50. A survey of the fifty states shows \$1.50 to be within the range of charges in other states. Additionally, the 9-1-1 surcharge has not increased since the early 90s with the exception of the addition of wireless devices being subject to the surcharge in 2005. We strongly urge support of this provision of the bill.

The OFDDA is not in favor of the proposed two percent increase to those counties with populations of 40,000 or under. This provision sets an entirely new precedent in Oregon's statutes and represents a formula that is not consistent with other states.

On behalf of rural fire protection districts throughout Oregon, thank you for the opportunity place our comments on the record.