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Our Vision: "Embrace a vibrant and growing organization characterized by member support, professional development and stakeholder education."

TO: Members of the House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness
FROM: Hasina Wittenberg, APCO/NENA
DATE: March 12, 2019
RE: **Testimony in Support of HB 2449 – 9-1-1 Tax Increase**

INTRODUCTION

Members of the House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. For the record my name is Hasina Wittenberg and I appear before you today on behalf of the Oregon Chapters of the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) and National Emergency Number Association (NENA) to provide testimony in support of HB 2449.

BACKGROUND – TAX AND FUNDING

In 1981 the Oregon Legislature issued a mandate for statewide 9-1-1 services and instituted a 3% surcharge on subscriber's telephone lines. At that time there were over 280 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) in Oregon with only a few providing basic 9-1-1 service, and none provided Enhanced 9-1-1 service.

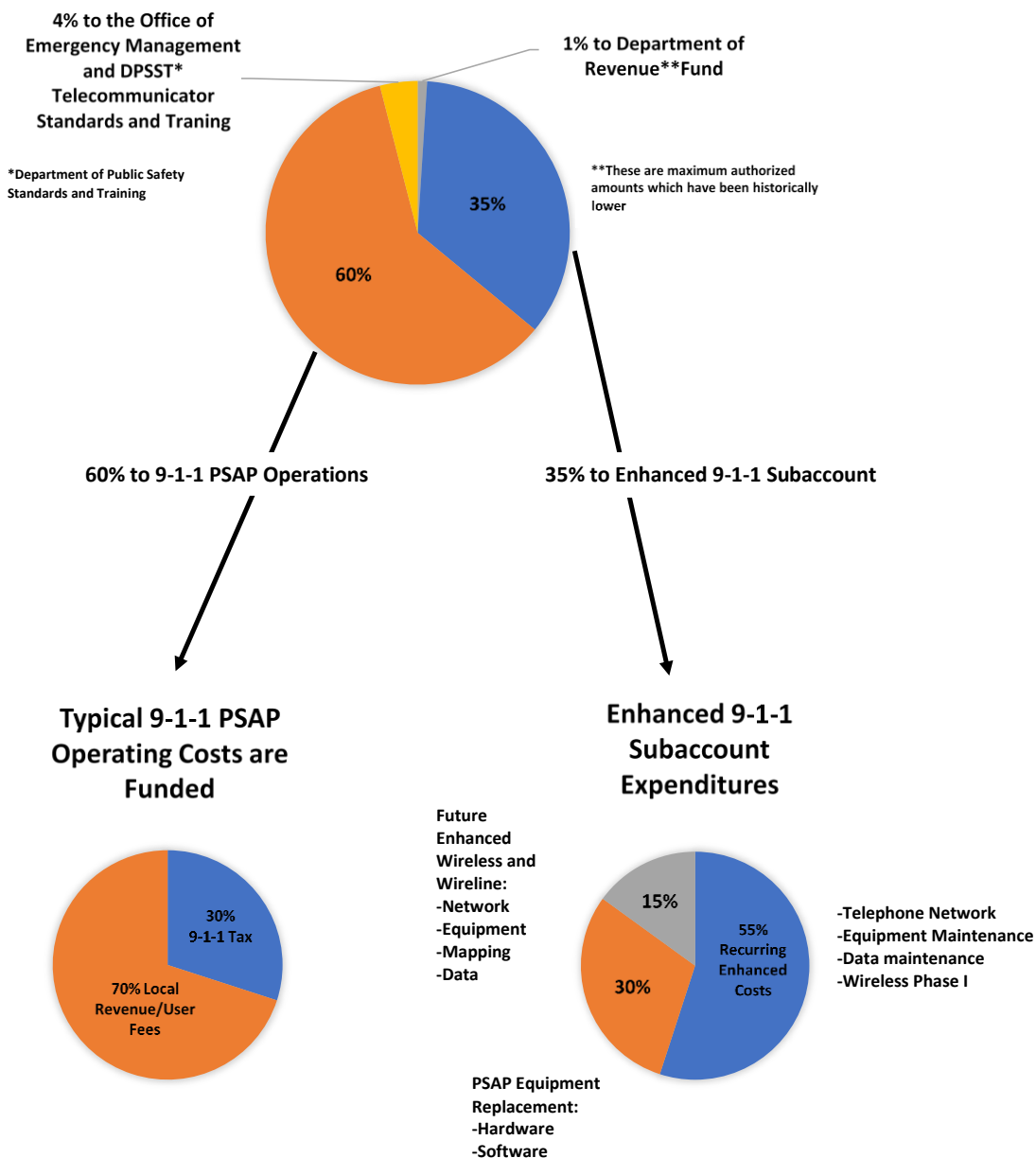
The 1991 legislature increased the surcharge to 5% and mandated Enhanced 9-1-1 service (9-1-1 caller's address and responsible police, fire and EMS provider displayed to the call-taker). However, in 1995 the 5% surcharge was converted to an approximate equivalent 75-cent surcharge to provide the 9-1-1 program with greater revenue stability and predictability. Revenue is distributed as follows:

- ✓ Sixty percent (60%) of the revenues are distributed to public safety answering points for operation of the state's 43 PSAPs. Distribution is in proportion to population, except that no county receives less than 1% of the distribution. The funds may not be used for PSAP operations unless they are directly related to 9-1-1.
- ✓ Thirty-five percent (35%) of the revenues are managed by Oregon Emergency Management (OEM), a Division of Oregon Military Department, to pay for PSAP common network services, Federal Communications Commission Phase I and II wireless services, costs associated with the Enhanced 9-1-1 program which include network, database, equipment and other costs related to providing state-wide wire line and wireless 9-1-1 services.
- ✓ Four percent (actual costs or no more than 4% maximum) of revenues may be used by the Oregon Emergency Management to pay for OEM 9-1-1 program administration and Telecommunicator training at the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST).
- ✓ One percent (1%) of the revenues are distributed to the Department of Revenue for administrative processing cost recovery.



The Funding of 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) in Oregon

ALLOCATION OF THE 75¢ TAX ON ACCESS TO 9-1-1 SERVICES



9-1-1 TAX REVENUE & HB 2449

9-1-1 revenue is an essential funding component of the local 9-1-1 system. These revenues make up approximately 30% of a 9-1-1 center's operating revenue. Additional PSAP funding comes from property taxes via permanent tax rate authority, local option levies and user fees (e.g. law enforcement, fire districts).

According to OEM since 2010:

- 9-1-1 tax revenue has increased on average by 1.38% annually
- 9-1-1 call volume has increased by 19%
- Total statewide expenditures have increased on average by 2.8% annually
- Local jurisdiction expenditures have increased by 4.2%

However, the 9-1-1 tax has not increased since 1995.

Oregonians expect basic 9-1-1 service for emergencies. We support HB 2449 with the -1, -2, -3 and -4 amendments:

- -1 elimination of the 2% to counties with populations of less than 40,000
- -2 reduction in the 4% allocation to OEM to 2%
- -3 reduction in the 1% allocation to DOR to 0.5%
- -4 extension of the 9-1-1 tax sunset to 1/1/2030