

My name is Suzanne Settle representing Harney County as the Emergency Manager and Communications Director.

Harney County is requesting \$1,546,000 to do a complete communication infrastructure upgrade which will allow us to have a better, more complete communications within our county and then allow us to work with other regional counties for communication, including Grant County which we work with regularly.

The federal CISA program ensures that Public Safety, National Security and Emergency Preparedness communities can seamlessly and securely communicate during state and federal emergency operations to keep our residents safe.

We have equipment that has reached end of life that needs to be replaced and equipment that needs to be updated to put us in compliance with the CISA Project 25 Technology which is a critical tool for interoperability. The majority of this project is upgrades to existing sites and replacing equipment that has reached its end of usability.

In the summer of 2019 we had an accident on the Steens Mountains. The victims family had no ability to communicate to 911 without leaving the area to make the call. Once responders were on scene we had limited communications and once our Search & Rescue were on the cliffs we had no radio communications. Typically our first responders have to call on cell phones when they enter uncovered areas of the county and we keep track of time to make sure they make it to their destination or we have to send additional responders to make sure they're safe. We are the largest county in the state and one of the least populated but the majority of our critical responses and events involve people and residents from elsewhere including Oregon and all over the world.

In the event of a Cascadia-type or all-hazards event where the west side of the state loses communications we also lose communications. We will have no way to keep equipment, supplies and rescue responders flowing to the west side of the state and communicate with the state and federal partners.

When other counties do communications upgrades it costs upwards of \$70M dollars. With changes in the State Homeland Security Grants, allotting each county money based on population (we are one of the least populated counties in the state with a very small tax base) we were not able to write the grants we normally would've. 4 years ago we won a grant to do a communications assessment and are currently working on one of the phases of the project this year. The monies we are requesting will not just serve Harney County but everyone who visits or passes through our county. Thank you again for allowing me to testify. I'm happy to answer any questions.