

HB 2484 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal and World Affairs

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Meeting Dates: 5/4, 5/9

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs the Department of the State Fire Marshal to coordinate urban search and rescue functions of the state. Authorizes the department to solicit and accept gifts, grants, donations and other moneys from public and private sources for urban search and rescue purposes. Requires State Fire Marshal to submit a report on recommendations to the Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2024. Sunsets study and reporting requirement on January 2, 2025.

FISCAL: Fiscal impact issued

REVENUE: No revenue impact

HOUSE VOTE: 56-0-3-1

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Statewide response team efforts
- Program capacity
- Search and rescues involving emergencies like structural collapses, trench collapses, and confined space and water rescues

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) provides highly trained personnel and specialized equipment for response to large-scale catastrophic events and structural collapse. After the events of September 11, 2001, a federal grant program provided funding for Oregon to develop a USAR Task Force. The task force, comprised of eight regional teams, was coordinated through the Office of Emergency Management and the Office of the State Fire Marshal.

Federal funding for the program was discontinued in 2008 and several USAR teams disbanded. Currently there is no official USAR Task Force in Oregon. Realizing the ongoing need for additional preparation in the event of a large-scale disaster, the Office of the State Fire Marshal continues to coordinate USAR response efforts statewide. This multiagency effort includes the Oregon Department of Transportation, the Oregon Army National Guard and fire service providers.

House Bill 2484 A directs the Department of the State Fire Marshal to coordinate urban search and rescue functions of the state. It requires the department to study the needs of the state related to urban search and rescue functions and submit a report and testify on recommendations to the Legislative Assembly.