Clatsop County
Board of Commissioners

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March 20, 2023

Senator Kathleen Taylor, Chair
Senate Committee on Labor and Business
900 Court Street NE, S-423
Salem, OR 97301
Sen.KathleenTaylor@oregonlegislature.gov

Senator Daniel Bonham, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Labor and Business
900 Court Street NE, S-423
Salem, OR 97301
Sen.DanielBonham@oregonlegislature.gov

RE: Opposition to SB 907

Dear Chair Taylor, Vice-Chair Bonham, and Members of the Senate Committee on Labor and Business:

The Clatsop County Board of Commissioners, oppose Senate Bill (SB) 907. The legislation, in current form, is problematic for local governments with the duty and responsibility to respond to public safety, disaster and other types of emergencies. The Bill specifically allows an employee to refuse to perform an assigned task if it would cause the employee to report to or remain at a worksite during an evacuation due to a major disaster or emergency. The core mission and function of local government is to respond when people need us the most, including disasters and emergencies.

As a coastal community, Clatsop County is susceptible to any number of potential disasters that will require public employees to respond. It is our duty and commitment as an employer, to provide the training, tools and support to navigate these situations with care and concern for personal health and safety. Not showing up, or leaving the workplace in a time of need, is not an option.

The Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Division (OSHA) has the ability to utilize existing tools and authorities granted to them in the Oregon Revised Statutes and Oregon Administrative Rules to ensure employers provide a safe work place. SB 907 goes far beyond current workplace safety standards, and grants employees the right to leave the job site when the public needs them the most.

Thank you for considering our input.

Sincerely,

Mark Kujala, Chair
Clatsop County Board of Commissioners