

SB 1002: Supporting Districts with School Safety and Emergency Management

Senate Education Committee

March 24, 2023

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the Senate Education Committee, my name is Daniel Kraus and I serve as Clackamas ESD's emergency preparedness consultant working in support of the Oregon Department of Education's School Safety & Emergency Management (SSEM) program. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 1002, which would repurpose existing funding to continue the important work of the current federal grant (GSEM).

It is extremely rewarding to be able to help schools through difficult times and issues of emergency management. School administrators frequently need guidance or technical assistance in this area, but all educators want to make their school, employees and students safe from the many threats and hazards for which they must prepare. Using the existing partnerships between ESDs and districts has been a great way to provide this support.

The SSEM and SSPS programs have been able to collaborate significantly, particularly because the threat assessment work is a critical part of the mitigation and protection functions of emergency management. But without the broader context of a holistic emergency management view, SSPS would operate in isolation. Furthermore, as I often tell school incident management teams, nobody gets to choose their emergency—the crisis chooses us. By viewing threat assessment in a broader context, we improve the performance of the leadership team in a variety of situations.

One of the areas that has been exceptionally useful has been the ability of SSEM emergency preparedness consultants to help districts that have been involved in a crisis to develop and apply lessons learned from the incident. By being trusted partners, SSEM has been able to help those districts improve their plans, develop new solutions and training, and increase the confidence with which the districts engage other similar issues.

I serve the districts in Tillamook and Clatsop counties. In addition to challenges faced by many rural districts, this area requires planning for a Cascadia event. In many cases the schools

are looked at by their communities as more than just a school, but also as a shelter after the event. It is a truly daunting challenge and the support we can provide to schools and the collaboration we develop with other emergency management organizations including tribal, city, county, and state functions will go a long way to making the whole community more ready to take on the Cascadia Subduction Zone event that will come.

Thank you for your consideration and support in making this program continue to do this critical work.

Sincerely,

Daniel Kraus

Emergency Preparedness Consultant

Clackamas Education Service District