

Submitter: Rich Raynor

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure: SB1068

Committee Chair Meek, Vice Chair Boquist, and committee members, I am providing written testimony in support of SB 1068.

Under current laws and statutes, a property owner can choose not to be in a Rural Fire Protection District.

I want to address what I believe is a key objection to this legislation. That is the attitude some have of "Just bill me for the service if I need it and use your service". If everyone were to take that stance; what service would exist for these property owners to call? What service would exist for anyone to call? The answer is: No service would exist. There would no one to call when someone was trapped, bleeding to death, in a mangled car, and they needed someone to not only make every professional effort to stabilize them medically, but also to cut them out of that car with the Jaws of Life. Who will extinguish the flames of the car on fire with people trapped inside? What trained individuals would respond in any number of fire, medical, or life threatening emergencies without a tax base to fund the existence of these programs? Are we supposed to have multiple subscription services for emergency services, with neighbors subscribing to different services? Anyone who thinks about this situation rationally must realize and admit there is no way for any emergency services to exist without everyone participating in the tax base.

Make no mistake about it, modern fire districts, and all the dedicated men and women who are working for those districts, are much more than firefighters. They are emergency service providers. From emergency medical services, often arriving before ambulances, to automobile wreck extraction and rescues from all sorts of life threatening situations, today's firefighters perform a broad range of services. All of them vital to a person in need.

Most of all, they are there when needed because of the tax-based funding that supports them.

Please do your part to support emergency services for all by ensuring that all participate in the funding.

Please pass SB1068.

Respectfully,

Rich Raynor