
OREGON Fire Marshals ASSOCIATION

March 5, 2024

Joint Committee On Ways and Means
900 Court St. NE
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Opposing SB 1521 Section 13-Automatic Sprinkler Systems Exemption

Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey and Members of the Subcommittee:

The Oregon Fire Marshals Association thanks you for the opportunity to express our opposition to SB 1521. The Oregon Fire Marshal's Association understands the need and desire to establish increased housing to address Oregon's vulnerable population and the housing crisis. We do, however, have significant reservations in doing so when it means lowering the standards of the state adopted Oregon Residential Specialty Code.

Adult Foster Homes serve a valuable role in our long-term care system for vulnerable Oregonians. Oregon has a well-established regulatory system, including building, fire, and life safety codes that are based on the current definitions of an adult foster home serving up to five residents, and a residential care facility serving six or more residents.

Fire sprinklers have a proven track record to be the best way to protect lives during a fire. Modern home furnishings like couches and beds contain materials that are essentially gasoline in solid form. When these materials become involved in a fire, occupants may be limited to 3-5 minutes to escape the toxic smoke these materials produce. Sprinkler systems provide occupants valuable time and are critical for vulnerable populations that cannot evacuate on their own.

Housing in Oregon is at a critical point. For vulnerable Oregonians, we must provide housing that is available, but also safe. Please consider requiring sprinkler systems for new foster homes.

On behalf of the Oregon Fire Marshal's Association, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Regards,

Shawn C. Olson
Legislative Chair-Oregon Fire Marshal's Association

Oregon Fire Marshals Association
PO Box 8109 Salem, OR 97303
www.ofma.net