



January 28, 2025

Senate Committee on Finance & Revenue  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Senator Meek and Committee Member Senator Starr,

My name is April Wallace, and I am the Fire Chief for the City of Dallas Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department. I am writing to express my strong support for SB 545, the Volunteer Firefighter Tax Credit Bill.

The Dallas Fire Department, established in 1878, has a long and proud history of volunteerism. Our community has consistently shown its support through bonds for essential equipment and by serving as firefighters. In the aftermath of September 11th, we saw a surge in volunteerism, with a record number of volunteer firefighters and a waiting list to join. Unfortunately, this number has dwindled due to increased training requirements, industry shifts, and societal changes.

In 2015, our department transitioned to a combination fire department, with both paid and volunteer firefighters. Even with paid firefighters, our department and community still rely heavily on a volunteer response. It takes a special individual to donate their time to a dangerous role with high risk and minimal reward. Our current volunteers dedicate an average of 205 hours per year, including training and emergency responses. They are trained to the same level as our career firefighters, as there should be no distinction when it comes to serving as a firefighter. This time commitment takes them away from their families, homes, and careers. They serve proudly and selflessly, asking for nothing in return. Recruiting and retaining volunteers has been challenging, and this proposed tax credit could be a valuable tool to address this issue.

I urge you to pass SB 545. This tax credit is a small but meaningful token of appreciation for volunteer firefighters across Oregon who selflessly serve their communities with honor and pride.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "April Wallace", written in a cursive style.

April Wallace  
Fire Chief