



Illinois Valley Fire District

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House Committee on Higher Education Committee and Workforce Development

Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Strong Support for House Bill 3219 – Sustained State Funding for the Oregon Hazards Lab

Dear Chair Hudson, Vice-Chairs Harbick and Fragala, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Illinois Valley Fire District, I write to express our strong support for House Bill 3219, which seeks to establish sustained state funding for the Oregon Hazards Lab (OHAZ) at the University of Oregon. As an all-hazard fire district, we recognize the vital role OHAZ plays in safeguarding Oregonians from both natural and human-made hazards.

OHAZ is a critical asset in Oregon's disaster preparedness and response efforts. Through its seismic, wildfire, and remote sensing networks, it provides real-time, life-saving data that helps emergency responders and communities mitigate the impact of earthquakes, wildfires, landslides, and other disasters.

In particular, the **Shake Alert Earthquake Early Warning System** offers crucial seconds of advance notice before severe shaking begins, allowing Oregonians to take protective action. Additionally, **OHAZ's wildfire detection and situational awareness systems** are increasingly vital in an era of escalating fire risk, enhancing rapid response and reducing destruction. These programs are not theoretical—they are operational systems actively protecting lives and property.

Investing in OHAZ is a **sound financial decision**. Hazard monitoring and early warning systems save Oregon millions of dollars by reducing disaster response costs, infrastructure damage, and economic disruption. Without sustained state funding to maintain and expand this infrastructure, the long-term viability of these programs is at risk, leaving our communities more vulnerable at a time when proactive resilience planning is more critical than ever.

We urge you to take decisive action by **passing House Bill 3219** and securing the future of OHAZ. Doing so will ensure Oregon remains a leader in disaster resilience—protecting lives, property, and the state's economic well-being.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We appreciate your leadership in advancing policies that safeguard our communities, and we stand ready to support you in this effort.

Sincerely,

John Holmes, M.S.
Fire Chief
Illinois Valley Fire District | Josephine County, OR