



Lane County Fire Defense Board
92068 Marcola Rd
Marcola, Oregon 97454

**House Committee on Higher Education Committee and Workforce
Development**

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

**Subject: 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 Lane County Fire Defense Board, I am writing 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 a board made up of the Fire Chiefs for Fire
Agencies throughout Lane County, we recognize the vital role that the
Oregon Hazards Lab plays in ensuring the safety and security of
Oregonians in the face of natural and human-made hazards.

OHAZ is a critical asset to disaster preparedness and response efforts in
Oregon and adjacent states. Through its seismic, wildfire, and remote
sensing networks, OHAZ 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 **ShakeAlert Earthquake Early Warning System** can
provide 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 active, operational systems that directly protect lives and property.

Investing in OHAZ is a smart 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 its 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,

Steven Wallace
County Fire Defense Chief
Lane County Fire Defense Board
Lane County, Oregon