



To: Members of the House Committee on Judiciary

From: Chief Brian Stewart
Clackamas Fire District
Oregon Fire Chiefs Association

Chief Ben Stange
Polk County Fire District No. 1
SDAO Fire Districts

Date: March 5th, 2024

Re: HB 3426 – Testimony in Support

Chair Kropf and members of the committee,

The Oregon Fire Chiefs Association and Special District Association of Oregon Fire Districts support HB 3426, a bill that strengthens existing laws to further limit the use of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) by private individuals during firefighting operations and active search and rescue (SAR) missions.

We want to begin by thanking Representative Boice for his ongoing support of the fire service and public safety.

Drones have become a valuable asset for emergency responders and law enforcement, enhancing safety and efficiency during critical operations. However, unauthorized drone activity by private citizens can disrupt these vital efforts, creating dangerous situations for both first responders and the public.

In wildfire situations, unauthorized drones have halted aerial firefighting operations and water rescues, increasing the risks to surrounding communities. HB 3426 addresses this by clarifying and reinforcing restrictions on private drone use in these situations, ensuring that emergency operations can proceed without unnecessary interference.

We encourage you to keep supporting initiatives that enhance emergency response and help keep our communities safe.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chief Ben Stange
Polk County Fire District No. 1

Chief Brian Stewart
Clackamas Fire District