



March 18, 2025

Testimony in Support of HB 3572

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Javadi and Nelson,

On behalf of the Lebanon Fire District (LFD), I strongly urge the passage of HB 3572 EMS Modernization Phase 2. In 2010, advocates noticed that without intervention, Oregon's EMS workforce and infrastructure would begin to face significant challenges. Around this time, the EMS Modernization Taskforce was created. This taskforce crafted proposals to address long-term solutions that fortify Oregon's EMS system. In 2024, HB 4081 was passed to begin the address the challenges Oregon's EMS system continues to face. Now, HB 3572 aims to build upon HB 4081, continuing to serve Oregonians by addressing Oregon's paramedic and EMT workforce, through a combination of long-term planning and short-term rural relief.

The Lebanon Fire District (LFD) has been a cornerstone of public safety in Linn County since its establishment in 1884. Over the years, the district has evolved into a dynamic all-hazards organization, seamlessly integrating career firefighters and dedicated volunteers. With 43 skilled career personnel and 55 committed volunteers, LFD operates five stations—two staffed full-time and three supported by volunteers only. The district covers a 134-square-mile fire protection area serving 30,000 residents and oversees a 419-square-mile ambulance service area (ASA) that provides emergency medical care to 40,000 people across Lebanon, parts of Scio, Brownsville, and unincorporated areas of Linn County.


Like many departments across Oregon, LFD is facing increasing difficulty in recruiting and retaining paramedics and EMT's. Nationally, the number of these professionals graduating programs have been steady, however, the number entering pre-hospital emergency care has declined significantly. Many are choosing to move into the hospital setting or private companies and not choosing to enter the pre-hospital workforce. As a rural fire agency, we lack the funding to compete with hospitals, private ambulances, and larger fire agencies for the scarce work force that is currently available. This has led to an open recruitment for the LFD for over 24-month having to reduce our ambulance services to over 419-square-miles of ASA because of this issue.

If passed HB 3572 will provide:

- Technical fixes to HB 4081, passed in 2024.
- An EMS Mobilization Plan to allow for the redistribution of EMS resources around the state in a more streamlined way.
- Short-term workforce initiatives, with \$9 million in appropriated funding, that provides EMS workforce relief, especially in rural areas. The EMS workforce is underfunded and understaffed, with some areas of the state having no EMS presence creating an "EMS Desert." These policies will help us stop the bleeding until a longer-term strategy comes into effect.

- Requires the State Program to create a 10-year strategic EMS plan in Oregon to provide a suite of long-term solutions to the EMS workforce and funding crisis, which will naturally replace our short-term solutions.

The situation facing the Oregon ambulance providers is dire. Oregon EMS infrastructure and service delivery throughout the State is failing! HB 3572 represents a long-overdue investment in EMS to all Oregonians. On behalf of the Lebanon Fire District (LFD), I strongly urge the passage of HB 3572, which would support EMS service delivery for all EMS providers around the state, like the LFD, to preserve services to our communities. I urge lawmakers to pass this legislation and send a clear message that Oregon values and supports our emergency services.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph Rodondi". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J".

Joseph Rodondi
Fire Chief – Lebanon Fire District