

Submitter: Judith Kerr

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3328

83rd OREGON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY – HOUSE BILL 3328 IN OPPOSITION

HB 3328 Inclusion sponsored by Representative Mark Owens addresses the use of Secure Rural Schools/Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act of 2000 (SRS) funds. This amendment to the Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 368.706 was at the request of one county commissioner without the full consensus of the Grant County governing body or road fund budgeting taskforce which would be impacted.

The amendment proposes that Grant County, in eastern Oregon, be added to the western Oregon counties of Coos, Curry, Douglas, Josephine, Klamath, Lane and Linn that may use road fund (SRS Title I) moneys for patrolling county roads by county law enforcement officials. An added Section 2 of this proposal states that an emergency is declared to exist and is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety.

Passage of such an amendment would declare an emergency in those seven counties west of the Cascades as well as Grant County. No crisis, imminent danger or emergency exists in Grant County. As used in ORS 294.481, “emergency situation” means:

- (a) Involuntary conversion or destruction of the property of a municipal corporation;
- (b) Civil disturbance;
- (c) Natural disaster; or
- (d) Any public calamity. [Formerly 294.455; 2013 c.420 §6]

I understand that the authority to declare an emergency of this magnitude within eight counties lies with the governor. Chapter 753, Oregon Laws, Sec. 1-10, 11-15, County Public Safety Fiscal Emergencies.

Fiscal Impact: This proposed amendment, if passed, would allow county law enforcement access to funds dedicated by ORS 368.705 to establishing, laying out, opening, surveying, altering, improving, constructing, maintaining and repairing county roads and bridges on county roads. All Grant County road department operations are supported solely by 75% of dwindling Title I SRS funds. Each year, issuance of those funds from the Federal Government is not guaranteed.

Unnecessary drains on reserved funds could severely impact the maintenance of county roads that serve school, postal service, and public access.

Revenue Impact: Wherein Title III funds provide reimbursement for search and rescue and other emergency services, including firefighting and law enforcement patrols. The use of the Title III emergency services has been served by this means

by Grant County Resolution 25-05, dtd 1/22/202; Resolution 24-03; and Resolution 21-17 which was entitled Supplemental Budget for Sheriff Patrol.

I feel that the intent of this proposed amendment has its basis in the perceived budget shortfall of the county sheriff. The Grant County Sheriff's office, supported by County taxes, currently expects to receive a budget increase of \$200,000 from the communities of John Day and Prairie City as well as using the shared services of a funded school resource officer. The challenge of budget balancing exists at all levels of government and this is a concern involving the whole county and should be addressed by appropriate funding through the County General Fund as well as the Title III sources. Therefore, I strongly object to the passing of this amendment to a codified Oregon Revised Statute.

I include pertinent information regarding the applicability in comparing population and county road miles within the other counties included in this proposal.

County	Population	County Road Miles
Lane	382,353	1,472
Linn	131,496	1,139
Douglas	111,201	1,144
Coos	64,929	529
Curry	23,446	535.51
Klamath	69,413	850
Josephine	87,500	575

AND

Grant	7,233	487
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Please note that adjacent western Oregon counties such as Malheur, Harney, Wheeler, Morrow, Lake, Wallowa and Gillam are not requesting to be included in this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration in addressing this issue.

Judy Kerr

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