



***Oregon's Voice for Long Term Care & Senior Housing***

February 10, 2026

House Committee on Health Care  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs Diehl and Nelson, and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Health Care Association (OHCA) represents more than 90% of long term care providers across Oregon, including skilled nursing facilities, assisted living, residential care, memory care facilities, and in-home care agencies. Our members serve older adults and people with disabilities with accessible, high-quality long term services and supports.

We support House Bill 4053 and appreciate the proponent's work on continued efforts to modernize and improve Oregon's emergency medical services (EMS) system. That said, we would like to flag an issue that needs to be addressed in a future session. Specifically, it is vital that the membership composition of the Long Term Care and Senior Care Emergency Medical Services Advisory Subcommittee, which will be stood up January 1, 2029, have appropriate representation and expertise from the long term care sector. Under the current structure, there will be four seats on the Subcommittee, none of which are directly tied to long term care.

Long term care settings are unique, with complex licensing and staffing requirements that vary between nursing facilities and community-based care facilities. These variances have a direct impact on how facilities use EMS. To that end, there must be representatives on the Subcommittee who can speak to these specific issues and nuances in long term care. Our recommendation is to include **two representatives from long term care on the subcommittee**. Right now, the overarching Emergency Medical Services Program has one seat for a long term care representative as follows:

*(n) One must be a person who works in a long term care facility, as defined in ORS 442.015, or who represents long term care facilities, or who works in a residential facility, as defined in ORS 443.400, or who represents residential facilities;*

We recommend using similar language to designate two representatives from long term care on the Long Term Care and Senior Care Emergency Services Advisory Subcommittee. Making this change will help to ensure there is adequate representation to address the continuing needs

and further education between EMS response within long term care communities and the providers and caregivers who work in them.

We have time to make this change since the Subcommittee will not become operational until 2029. The delay is since there is an existing Senior Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council functioning under the Oregon Department of Human Services, which sunsets in 2029. This Advisory Council was established by the Legislature via HB 2397 (2021) and its charge was in part to help vet and make recommendations for pilot projects that will improve EMS access in long term care supports and support community-based EMS projects.

In January 2025, the first four pilot project were approved, totaling \$2.3 million.

1. Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue (TVF&R) received \$758,000 for an Advanced Resource Medic (ARM) unit where an advanced practitioner such as a physician's assistant staffs a response vehicle with an advanced practice paramedic. The ARM unit will operate in licensed care facilities. The ARM unit will provide care in the home, diverting patients away from hospitals and the 911 system.
2. City of Eugene (Eugene – Springfield Fire, ESF) received \$1.2 million is for a Community Aid Response Unit (CARE Unit) where a response unit will be part of the 911 system to respond to care facilities and be able to stay on scene to provide services longer than a typical response unit. The unit will be a paramedic and EMT that will respond to low level calls at care facilities and do education at care facilities.
3. City of Albany received \$68,500 is for Care Facility Response Safety Program where the fire department is partnering with local care facilities to deploy lifting devices and provide training for such devices.
4. City of Lake Oswego received \$288,000 for Risk Reduction and Prevention and Education Programs for Senior Living Communities. The fire department will hire a risk reduction specialist and partner with local care facilities to develop emergency plans.

OHCA is dedicated to working with the state's EMS Advisory Committee to do all we can to ensure long term care communities are properly utilizing emergency personnel, and that emergency response personnel are educated when entering a community that houses seniors, some living with dementia.

Thank you for your consideration and willingness to work with us to add long term care represented seats to the Long Term Care and Senior Care Emergency Medical Services Advisory Subcommittee in the 2027 legislative session.

Sincerely,

Meredith Coba  
Director of Legislative and Political Affairs