

Submitter: Denice Searcy
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management and Veterans
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4121
NO on HB 4121

HB 4121 – Creates statewide emergency preparedness offices and authorities to coordinate emergency management.

The state does not need a statewide office that would slow down responses on the local level. This bill does not belong in a short session. These revisions of duties could easily be incorporated into existing programs with little or no cost.

- Authorizes bonding for public safety projects.
- Requires state agencies to designate liaisons for emergency management.
- Imposes duties on the Oregon Department of Emergency Management related to management of emergency preparedness assets.
- Modifies the definitions of and grant requirements for Resilience Hubs and Resilience Networks.
- Authorizes certain training facilities to host overnight training activities.
- Authorizes the Oregon Department of Emergency Management to obtain fingerprints of employees or contractors.
- Authorizes counties to waive certain civil penalties related to food service facilities during emergencies.
- Requires the Department of the State Fire Marshal to study health coverage for firefighters.
- Requires legislative committees to identify a revenue source for certain public safety programs.
- Establishes grant programs for emergencies.

Legislation passed includes a number of actions for preparedness, and this bill carves out pieces of programs just for the sake of creating a new agency and growing government.

HISTORY- WE already have the below listed laws and agencies in place:

State Preparedness and Incident Response Equipment (SPIRE) Program: In 2017, the Legislature established the SPIRE program through House Bill 2687. This program enables the state to purchase and strategically pre-place emergency equipment—such as rescue boats, all-terrain vehicles, and water purification trailers—for use by local agencies during statewide emergencies like a Cascadia

earthquake. The program has been expanded through subsequent funding, including a \$5 million bond measure in 2020 (House Bill 4144-A, not enacted, but concept pursued).

OEM Restructuring and Independence: In 2022, the Legislature passed House Bill 2927, which transferred OEM from the Oregon State Police to a standalone agency with its own dedicated funding, enhancing its operational independence and authority.

Emergency Management Advisory Councils: In 2021, House Bill 2927 established the Emergency Preparedness Advisory Council (EPAC) within the Governor's Office, tasked with providing policy recommendations on disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. The Local Government Emergency Management Advisory Council was also created to advise OEM.

Emergency Operations and Training: The Legislature has supported the development of the State of Oregon Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and the State Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP), which guide training, exercises, and readiness efforts. In 2023, the Legislature approved funding for 41 new OEM positions and a 24-hour operations center, enhancing real-time response capabilities.

County-Level Preparedness Grants: In 2025, the Legislature enacted a new grant program (Senate Bill 505) to fund emergency preparedness coordinators in coastal counties (Clatsop, Coos, Curry, Douglas, Lane, Lincoln, and Tillamook), strengthening local disaster readiness.

This looks to be added spending for the sake of spending and taxing Oregonians even more. Chances are that these monies will never see their intended goals and just fund more state jobs and PERS. NO MORE!!!