



Clatsop County Emergency Management

800 Exchange St., Suite 400
Astoria, OR 97103
(503) 325-8645 phone / (503) 325-8325 fax
www.co.clatsop.or.us

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Dear Co-Chairs Girod and Holvey and members of the Committee;

As a County Emergency Manager familiar with the ShakeAlert/ALERTWildfire system, I am writing today in support of the request for a statewide multi-hazard alerting system for earthquakes and wildfires as part of the Governor's Resiliency 2025 vision. Since 2018, I have been involved in the ShakeAlert project's Committee for Communication, Education and Outreach as a member of the emergency management working group. More recently, I was asked by the Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission to participate in another work group tasked with identifying a specific ShakeAlert/ALERTWildfire project or project area on which to focus. At the same time, I've also kept my finger on the pulse of the California ShakeAlert program roll-out, partly to better understand what to expect in Oregon, but at the local level, to better understand how the system is used elsewhere alongside local mass notification systems, like the one I manage for my community, to improve public safety

I urge your Committee to support the proposed \$12 million capital investment to build out the ShakeAlert/ALERTWildfire system, because the Oregon program currently has tremendous momentum that simply must be maintained if we are to realize the full benefit of the program. I can imagine that some reluctance exists around providing continued funding to a public system that the public isn't using yet, but even at the local level, the primary investment for an alerting system happens on the front end and always before the tangible benefits can be adequately demonstrated. System configuration, equipment installment/testing, education and stakeholder outreach are key pieces which occur in tandem and in advance of broader public awareness and participation.

The professional team and partners working to build out the system in Oregon have continued to demonstrate progress in all areas. They are passionate about the work and dedicated to getting it right. I am most familiar with the outreach and education efforts, which have been steady and smart. I understand well—because I've been involved in other regional communications projects over the years—that whole community planning and effective stakeholder outreach factor critically into the success of a program...or failure. The project leads have been steady in maintaining a presence and have not pushed outreach to the back burner, even when faced with challenges in other areas. When I say they've been smart, I refer to an ongoing desire to improve outreach efforts, which is best demonstrated by their willingness to accept feedback and pivot when necessary to achieve the goal.

The emphasis in Oregon and on ShakeAlert until relatively recently has appeared to center around the threat of a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake. Sometimes it feels that we're impossibly entrenched in the emergency response discussion around CSZ, because there is still so much to consider about how we'll react in the hours, days and weeks following a catastrophic event. But in reality, best practices in emergency management lean toward a multi-hazard approach, because many protective measures and actions tend to apply across a breadth of hazards. Further, directing resources toward mitigation efforts whenever practicably possible is also an accepted best practice, because the benefits of getting ahead of an event by identifying ways to reduce risk are undeniable. By investing in sensors for the ShakeAlert earthquake early warning, cameras for ALERTWildfire, and telemetry to allow real-time communication, the State assumes a multi-hazard approach to disaster response as well as mitigation.

Thank you,

Tiffany Brown, Director
Clatsop County Emergency Management