



**2019 RDPO Policy Committee
Members**

Clr. Karylinn Echols
(Chair)

City of Gresham

Comm. Jim Bernard
(Vice Chair)

Clackamas County

Clr. Kyle Allen

City of Hillsboro

Ms. Marla Blagg
TriMet

Mr. Vince Granato
Port of Portland

Comm. Jo Ann Hardesty
City of Portland

Clr. Randy Lauer
City of Troutdale

Councilor Temple Lentz, Clark
County

Comm. Margaret Magruder
Columbia County

Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle
City of Vancouver

Comm. Sharon Meieran
Multnomah County

Council President Lynn Peterson
Metro

Clr. Marc San Soucie
City of Beaverton

Comm. Dick Schouten,
Washington County

**Regional Disaster Preparedness
Organization**

9911 SE Bush Street
Portland, OR 97266
(503) 823-5386

Denise Barrett, Manager
denise.barrett@portlandoregon.gov

May 1, 2019

Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Sub-Committee on Capital Construction
Co-Chairs Senator Fred Girod and Representative Paul Holvey
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support for the proposed \$12 million in ShakeAlert and ALERTWildfire capital investment

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

On behalf of the Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization (RDPO), I write to express support for the \$12 million capital investment in ShakeAlert earthquake early warning and ALERTWildfire, as proposed in HB5005, as well as in the Governor's 2019-21 budget and *Resiliency 2025* strategy. This investment will achieve three broad goals: (1) complete the buildout of ShakeAlert in Oregon by 2023, (2) develop a more robust data communications backbone that supports both ShakeAlert and ALERTWildfire, and (3) install ALERTWildfire cameras in fire prone regions throughout the state.

The RDPO is a bi-state partnership of local and regional government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private-sector stakeholders representing the Portland metropolitan region. The region geographically encompasses Clackamas, Columbia, Multnomah, and Washington Counties in Oregon, and Clark County in Washington. Through strategic and coordinated planning, training and exercising, and investing in technology and specialized equipment, we work collaboratively to increase the region's preparedness and resiliency to disasters, including a Cascadia Subduction Zone (CSZ) earthquake, wildfires, floods, and terrorism events.

In 2016, the RDPO Policy Committee began recognizing the life-safety and other values of earthquake early warning and issued a policy statement that called for full funding of the ShakeAlert system, including from federal, state and other sources. In that document, we also expressed a commitment to ensuring our emergency management/services agencies and the public are prepared to participate in a coordinated manner.

ShakeAlert uses earthquake science and the technology of monitoring systems to alert devices and people when shaking waves generated by an earthquake are expected to arrive at their location. The seconds to minutes of warning can allow people and systems to take actions to protect life and property from destructive shaking. Through our engagement with partners working on the establishment of ShakeAlert, we have become aware that the establishment of the infrastructure, including sensors, along with involving the emergency management/services community and updating the public, is far behind states like California and Washington. Funds requested under H.B. 5005 will help Oregon catch up to ensure we have a robust system in place.

As a region that has experienced increased incidences of costly wildfires, deployed hundreds of fire fighters and other first responders to aid wildfire-affected communities across Oregon and other Western States in recent years, and advocated at the federal level for improved funding mechanisms to support wildfire mitigation, we see the establishment of the ALERTWildfire system as a tremendous asset to enabling quicker response to these events, preventing them from escalating to a catastrophic level.

By investing \$12 million in sensors for the ShakeAlert earthquake early warning, cameras for ALERTWildfire, and telemetry to allow real-time communication, the state will be advancing a multi-hazard approach to disaster response and mitigation. We believe this is a small price to pay for an inevitable high return in lives saved and natural assets and built environments preserved.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on this important topic.

Sincerely,

Karylinn Echols

[electronic signature]

Karylinn Echols,
RDPO Chair and City of Gresham Representative