

IMPACT STATEMENT

Legislation title: Recognize the important role of text messaging in providing excellent and inclusive 9-1-1 service and support the Bureau of Emergency Communications' efforts to work with the State of Oregon to implement Text to 9-1-1 in Portland and Multnomah County (Resolution)

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Purpose of proposed legislation and background information:

Text messaging is one of the primary ways people communicate today, especially younger people and members of the hearing and speech disabilities community. According to research published in January 2014 by the Pew Research Center, 90 percent of all American adults have a cell phone, and the percentage of adult cell phone owners who send or receive text messages was 81 percent in May 2013, up from 65% in September 2009. According to Forrester Research, an estimated 6 billion SMS messages are sent every day in the United States, which translates to more than 2.2 trillion per year.

The 9-1-1 community is constantly striving to meet the evolving needs of the public, and right now that means ensuring people can contact 9-1-1 with a text message. Text to 9-1-1 refers to the ability to send text messages to local 9-1-1 call centers during an emergency. Despite the growing reliance on text messaging by millions of people, The Bureau of Emergency Communications (BOEC) cannot receive text messages today; we can only receive voice calls, about two-thirds of which are from wireless phones.

BOEC is a member of the Portland Dispatch Center Consortium (PDCC), which also includes Clackamas 9-1-1, Lake Oswego 9-1-1, Columbia County 9-1-1, Washington County 9-1-1, Woodburn 9-1-1 and Clatsop County 9-1-1. The PDCC is working together to implement a pilot text to 9-1-1 program within the metro area.

Financial and budgetary impacts:

- The State of Oregon 9-1-1 Program will fund this project; the estimated cost for Portland is about \$15,000 annually.
- This action has no impact on current or future staffing levels. It merely provides another means for the community to contact 9-1-1.
- Financial impacts – None for the City of Portland since the State of Oregon 9-1-1 Program will pay for the technology. BOEC does not expect staff to require significant training to use the technology.

Community impacts and community involvement:

- There will be many significant benefits to the community, especially in cases in which the caller is not able to communicate verbally. For example, text to 9-1-1 will be very useful to the approximately 34 million Americans who are hard of hearing, deaf, or

speech-impaired. Text to 9-1-1 could also be useful when a crime is in process; the caller is facing domestic abuse; or the caller is injured and cannot speak.

- The deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired community uses texting as their primary form of communication, and has advocated for 9-1-1 centers to implement this system.
- Information on this effort has been provided to the Portland Commission on Disability (PCOD), the Oregon Association of the Deaf, and the Police and Screening Committee with the Oregon Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Program (ODHHS).
- We expect representatives from PCOD, the Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and ODHHS to testify in support of this resolution

Budgetary Impact Worksheet

Does this action change appropriations?

- YES: Please complete the information below.
 NO: Skip this section

Fund	Fund Center	Commitment Item	Functional Area	Funded Program	Grant	Sponsored Program	Amount