



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

## Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission

Oregon Emergency Management

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Date: April 8, 2021

To: Rep. Paul Evans and Rep. Ronald Noble

From: Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission (OSSPAC)

Subject: HB 2892 Appropriates moneys to fund the Oregon Safety Assessment Program (OrSAP)

The mission of OSSPAC is to reduce the exposure of Oregonians to earthquake and tsunami hazards by improving public understanding of seismic risk, exposure and vulnerability, reducing and mitigating the possible effects of damaging earthquakes, and by reviewing and advising the Governor and Legislature on these issues. HB 2206, passed during the 2019 Regular Session, created OrSAP, but included no funding for the program. HB 2892 would appropriate monies from the General Fund to the Department of State Police for the Office of the State Fire Marshal to activate and administer OrSAP. OSSPAC supports HB 2892 because of the bill's significant, widespread, and efficient resiliency benefits.

**Improved Post-Earthquake Building Assessments.** The upcoming Cascadia Earthquake, and immediately following tsunami, are predicted to destroy and significantly damage buildings across the coast, coastal mountains, and Willamette Valley. The spectrum of building damage will range from complete destruction to little-to-no damage, with many buildings in between. Conducting safety assessments of homes, businesses, schools, etc. across such a massive scale of destruction will immediately overwhelm building inspectors. OrSAP, funded through HB 2892, will quickly bringing on-line additional professionals qualified to complete post-earthquake evaluations of structures.

**Draws on Existing Qualified Professionals.** The architecture and engineering sectors of Oregon's economy include many certified professionals with knowledge of local buildings and building codes. OrSAP will certify and dispatch qualified volunteers to perform post-earthquake building safety assessments. The program includes professionals from outside areas of earthquake damage, which increases the pool of available post-earthquake building inspectors. This aspect of the program will especially benefit smaller jurisdictions with fewer existing building inspectors.

**Reduced Demand on Emergency Shelters.** HB 2892 will more quickly help families and individuals return to buildings inspected and deemed safe. In doing so, it will also reduce the demand on emergency shelter beds, thus freeing up beds for those most in need.

**Improved Economic Recovery.** Small businesses are critical to the economic health of communities large and small throughout the state. Quickly completing safety assessments of commercial buildings will help business owners reopen and improve economic recovery.

cc: Mike Harryman, State Resilience Officer