March 2, 2015

RE: HB 2270 Relating to creation of an office of state resilience and a state resilience officer position

Dear Chair Lively, Members of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness:

The Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association (OAPA) represents over 800 professional and citizen planners in the State of Oregon. OAPA would like to express our overall support for the creation of an office of State Resilience and a State Resilience Officer position. Specifically, we recommend support for HB 2270 and the creation of such an office and position within the office of the Governor. In addition, we suggest including some of the language currently contained in HB 2269 in the text of HB 2270. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important issue for Oregonians.

OAPA understands the importance of planning for natural hazards and other threats to community vitality in Oregon. Resilience planning is by definition, a multi-objective, all-hazard, all-threat endeavor. OAPA also understands the specific, unique and potentially catastrophic threat posed by the Cascadia Subduction zone. Vulnerabilities to a subduction zone earthquake exist in all corners and across all sectors of our state. The Oregon Resilience Plan effectively demonstrates the interconnectedness of a number of these sectors. Further, the plan clearly identifies the extent to which our state’s economy is reliant on the provision of basic services: food, water, energy, roads, education, commerce, etc. In brief, Cascadia poses real and increasing risks to lives, property the economy and the environment in Oregon.

Improving Oregon’s resilience to Cascadia and other chronic hazards – floods, landslides, wildfires, coastal erosion, sea-level rise, winter storms, etc. – will involve an integrated, coordinated and sustained campaign. It will require a “paradigm shift” on the part of state government. It will require agreement among state agencies to align their missions, strategic plans and work programs to include the shared vision of a disaster resilient state. It will involve targeted and strategic investments that reduce risks posed by Cascadia AND improve our economy, increase our competitive advantage, make our communities more livable, protect and restore the environment, diversify our infrastructure systems, etc. This is no small task. Particularly in an era where lack of coordination across state agencies is common. Given the nature of the proposed office and position, OAPA strongly believes that coordination of state-level resilience should be managed at the highest levels of state administration. Thus, we support locating this office and position with the Office of the Governor.
OAPA also suggests incorporating some of the detailed language contained in HB 2269 that is absent from HB 2270. To that end, we are attaching a draft amended bill language for your consideration.

Given the vulnerability of many Oregon communities to natural hazard events, OAPA developed a policy white paper about this topic (see attached Resiliency: A Holistic Approach (Dec 2014)). This white paper describes natural hazard planning in Oregon and suggests a more holistic approach to thinking about natural hazard planning.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.

Sincerely,

Jason Franklin, AICP, President
Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association
House Bill 2270

Introduced and printed pursuant to House Rule 12.00. Presession filed (at the request of House Interim Committee on Transportation and Economic Development)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor’s brief statement of the essential features of the measure as introduced.

Creates office of State Resilience Officer in office of Governor to direct, coordinate and oversee seismic safety and resilience planning and preparation by state agencies.

Directs Governor to appoint individual to office, subject to Senate confirmation.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

Relating to seismic resilience planning.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. (1) The office of State Resilience Officer is created in the office of the Governor. The office of State Resilience Officer shall direct, implement and coordinate seismic safety and resilience goal setting and state agency planning and preparation to improve seismic safety and overall resilience to all hazards.

(2) The Governor shall appoint an individual to serve as the State Resilience Officer, subject to confirmation by the Senate pursuant to Article III, section 4, of the Oregon Constitution.

(3) The legislative branch of government and the judicial branch of government shall each select an individual to monitor the effectiveness of seismic safety and planning for resilience to all hazards—planning in their branch.

(4) The State Resilience Officer shall:

(a) Perform the duties of the office, as determined by the Governor.

(b) Provide leadership in achieving the mission of the Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission functions described in ORS 401.918.

(c) Provide assistance and direction to the Oregon Business Development Department to implement the seismic rehabilitation grant program established in ORS 401.910.

(d) Monitor the actions of state agencies to ensure that agency action furthers the community resilience goals of this state.

(e) Serve as an active member of the State Interagency Hazard Mitigation Team.

(4) The State Resilience Officer shall also:

(a) Adopt by rule a state multi-hazard resilience vision to guide and align future updates to existing state emergency operations plan, recovery plan, natural hazard mitigation plan, as well as other functional and infrastructure related plans and to update the resilience vision each biennium. In developing the resilience vision, the officer shall consult with and consider the recommendations of state agencies and local governments, private sector experts and the Legislative Fiscal Officer.

(b) Identify and recommend to the Governor the resources that are necessary to implement the vision adopted under paragraph (a) of this subsection. The Governor shall consider the recommendations of the State Resilience Officer under this paragraph in developing a biennial budget for the state.
NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

LC 1304