Statement from Building for Public Safety Vote Yes Proposition #1

The Committee – **Building for Public Safety Vote Yes Proposition #1**, wishes to express their unwavering support of our Firefighters, Fire Department and of Proposition1 authorizing the sale of bonds to build a new station and needed improvements at our 5 community stations in Merritt, Plain, Lake Wenatchee, Ponderosa, and Chiwawa Pines.

The Department's strategic planning over the last 8 years has set a path to provide service over the next 20 years. As a district with an aging population and one that lives in the #1 Wildland Urban Interface fire risk in the State of Washington it is imperative we do the best we can to reduce response times for medical calls, rescue, and for fire suppression. Our Fire Department is entirely funded, supported and staffed locally, it is up to only us as a community to ensure it is functioning for our benefit

It is also imperative we provide safe and adequate stations for our volunteer firefighters. Current facilities are in many cases entirely non-compliant; we force our volunteers to respond from home and work from old garages. Some stations are so small that modern fire apparatus does not fit in them. Only one station has a classroom that fits only half of our current department members. Without investment, the current path is not sustainable.

The cost is small when weighed against the collateral costs of rising insurance, and increased service demands across our local district. As a bond the cost to the taxpayer does not increase over time, it is like a building mortgage. Bond funding in turn opens doors to potential matching grant awards. All of the funding stays right here serving our residents.

Saying no to this sale of bonds would have consequences. What does a no mean?

No means…No to addressing insurance risks and keeping costs down. No to providing firefighters and EMTs with adequate facilities. No to fixing very old stations, that will eventually close. No to faster response times to heart attacks and car accidents. No to faster response times when your house is on fire. No to supporting all the services that come out of these stations.

The only reasonable answer is YES, it is the most cost effective and responsible path forward.

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