

## Explanatory Statement

(500 words or less)

The proposed funding measure is essential for maintaining and enhancing the comprehensive emergency services provided by our fire district. This measure addresses several pressing issues our emergency response agencies face, ensuring that we can continue delivering effective care and support to residents.

Our fire district offers a wide range of services, including structure fire response, wildfire response, marine firefighting (serving 16 marinas), advanced life support ambulance services, community paramedic program, water rescue, and rope rescue. Additionally, we engage in community risk reduction activities, which encompass fire and life safety business inspections, fire extinguisher training for the community, emergency response planning and training. We also conduct reviews of sprinkler, fire alarm, and fire and life safety plans, and we provide educational STEM and college classes at the local high school, as well as fire safety education programs for schools.

Data shows that our emergency response system faces significant demands, with average monthly call volumes indicating that multiple emergency calls occur simultaneously 50% of the time. This high call volume reinforces the necessity of maintaining two ambulances available 24 hours a day, ensuring a prompt response to emergencies, regardless of when they occur.

Presently, ambulance billing revenue is declining, with our collection rate from Medicare and Medicaid averaging around 40%. This shortfall places a financial strain on our ability to provide critical services and procure the necessary medications and equipment to support our response operations. Securing the proposed funding will stabilize our finances and ensure that our emergency medical teams have the resources needed for high-quality care.

Moreover, the funding is vital for compliance with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) medical testing requirements for firefighters. Adhering to these standards enhances the safety and effectiveness of our personnel, ensuring we meet rigorous expectations for emergency responders.

The levy funds will also help fulfill federal and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) personal protective equipment testing requirements. Regular testing and replacement of equipment are essential to protect our firefighters and maintain their readiness to respond safely and effectively.

Additionally, a portion of the funding will support annual safety inspections and maintenance for our four fire stations. Well-maintained facilities are crucial for

operational efficiency and for providing a safe working environment for our emergency personnel.

Another vital aspect of the funding will be the maintenance and replacement of emergency vehicles in compliance with NFPA and federal standards. Ensuring that our emergency vehicles are in optimal condition is crucial for the safety of our responders and for the timely and effective delivery of services to our community.

In summary, the proposed measure is crucial for maintaining current operations and meeting the heightened demands for emergency services. It will provide the necessary funding to ensure adequate ambulance availability, support compliance with critical safety standards, fund vital equipment repairs and replacements, and maintain our facilities. By approving this measure, residents will help ensure our community receives the emergency care it deserves, safeguarding the health and safety of all citizens.