



Rapid City - Pennington County Emergency Management

Friday, January 23, 2015

Dustin Willett, Director
Pennington County Emergency Management
(605) 381-2198
dustin.willett@pennco.org

The Honorable Sam Kooiker, Mayor
Members of the Rapid City Common Council
300 6th Street
Rapid City, SD 57701

RE: Letter of support for proposed Ordinance 6029

Dear Mayor and Members of the Council:

Please accept this letter as a token of my support for the continued delivery of emergency services by the Rapid City Fire Department (RCFD) to the people who are employed at, reside in proximity to, and travel through the Rapid City Regional Airport (RCRA). I qualify my opinion based on more than 17 years of service in the Rapid City and Pennington County area in various public safety capacities to include the disciplines of law enforcement, fire suppression, rescue, emergency medical services, hazardous materials response, critical infrastructure protection, and most recently emergency management.

My most prominent concern regarding the privatization of aircraft rescue and firefighting at the RCRA is the undeniable loss of the value-added emergency response capabilities that the RCFD currently provides along with a potential shift in focus from the current not-for-profit public service oriented delivery model to one of corporate profits through minimum regulatory compliance. In addition, my years in public safety and my role of Emergency Manager has taught me the paramount importance of interpersonal, interdisciplinary, and interdepartmental relationships as they pertain to the successful preparation for, response to, and recovery from emergencies and disasters. Currently, the RCRA staff and traveling public are well-served by an intricate web of strong working relationships established and solidified over decades of common response, training, and exercises facilitated through mutual aid agreements between myriad

www.rcpcem.com

130 Kansas City Street, Ste. 130, Rapid City, SD 57701 P: 605.394.2185 F: 605.394.2180

public safety organizations in the Rapid City / Pennington County area. The introduction of a private 3rd-party service provider risks a significant disruption of those relationships as they pertain to responding to the RCRA and a subsequent deleterious impact to the RCRA staff and traveling public.

I would urge the Mayor and Council Members to support and facilitate the passage of proposed Ordinance 6029. I believe it to be in the best interests of the public as well as the City of Rapid City. Thank you for your careful consideration and for your dedicated service to your constituents and our community!

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dustin Willett', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Dustin Willett