



Oregon

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House Interim Committee on Veterans Affairs

HB 4063

Direct Licensing

For the record, my name is Jim Willis and I am the Director of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs. I am here today to support HB 4063 which would require certain professional licensing agencies to accept military training and education as an acceptable substitution for traditional training.

In November, ODVA testified before this committee, along with Marc San Souci from the Department of Defense, about the formation of a workgroup to explore the feasibility of direct licensing in Oregon.

Originally, this concept was discussed during the 2011 Regular Session. As you may recall, SB 275 created a standard way of applying military education, training and skills for credit throughout the Oregon college systems. During discussions surrounding this bill, it became apparent that the military training and education veterans receive in the Armed Forces is, in many instances, equivalent to that of civilian education for similar professions. HB 4063 is another step forward in getting veterans back into the workforce by allowing them to use the skills and experience they have gained in the military to succeed in their lives as civilians.

HB 4063 creates the process by which veterans could transition from their military occupation directly into a civilian occupation. We look forward to meeting with stakeholders in the licensing community to discuss the details of how this will work and to ensure the licensing boards' requirements are met.

This concept is a win-win proposition. Veterans – especially our Oregon National Guard veterans – will be given the opportunity to prove their military skills, education and experience meet licensing requirements so that they can re-enter the workforce quickly. And licensing agencies will be able to get more qualified people into the workforce, helping Oregon's economy.

Thank you for your consideration of a bill that honors and rewards veterans. I will be happy to answer any questions.