



# Oregon's Heroes Deserve a Safe Place to Call Home

## HB 2417

**Our armed forces accept the responsibility of guarding our freedom. When they return to our communities, we have a duty to provide them time and stability to heal and readjust to a different way of life. We must help them find a clear and solid pathway back to a productive life at home.**

Right now, too many veterans in Oregon struggle to find a safe, decent place to live. One out of every six men and women in our homeless shelters once wore a uniform in service to our country, and the youngest generation is struggling more. The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who wind up homeless do so in three years, compared with 13 years for Vietnam-era veterans. Veterans working in some of the most common jobs available through the Department of Labor's specialized training programs do not earn enough to afford to buy a median-priced home in many Oregon communities.

**We all, including military veterans, deserve a safe place to call home. HB 2417, proposed by the Housing Alliance, will increase an existing document recording fee passed in 2009 (HB 2436) by \$5. This would increase the fee charged on the first page of real estate related recordings. Funds raised through this fee will go to work across the range of housing needs, from ending homelessness to affordable housing to homeownership. We urge you to support HB 2417.**

Oregon's Veterans deserve a comprehensive plan which addresses all of their needs—from supportive housing for people returning with disabilities or injuries, to rent assistance to help prevent or end homelessness to assistance in buying their first home. Smart investments by the State can help our veterans return with dignity and leverage the federal resources they are entitled to. Funds raised through HB 2417 will provide emergency rent assistance to help veterans either prevent or end homelessness, will finance the building or rehabilitation of housing for veterans, and will provide downpayment assistance for veterans ready to take the step to homeownership.

*Emergency Housing:* Community partners need resources to help prevent veterans from falling into homelessness or to rapidly re-house them if they do. Emergency rent assistance prevents homelessness, and flexible resources can cover the costs associated with placing a veteran in housing with federal *Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Program Vouchers*.

*Veterans Supportive Housing :* We know that by linking safe, decent and affordable housing to critical services, like health care, job training and recovery support, we can significantly reduce the number of veterans living on our streets and in campsites. We can develop new units with links to critical services in communities around the state.

*Home Ownership:* Oregon has a Veteran's home loan program, but for many veterans, the barrier to homeownership is a down payment. A Down Payment Assistance Program, paired with the existing ORVET home loan program, could help veterans purchase their own home.



Housing Alliance c/o Neighborhood Partnerships ·  
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