



To: House Committee on Veterans' Services and Emergency Preparedness
From: Community Action Partnership of Oregon
Re: HJR 29

As the Community Action Partnership of Oregon (CAPO), we support a network of organizations across the state serving struggling Oregonians and the conditions they face every day. Together, we work to improve conditions for kids, veterans, seniors and people with disabilities in our communities. We help struggling families and individuals build a secure future.

HJR 29 creates a path for voters to provide the resources needed to meet the needs of Oregon's veterans

When veterans return home, barriers to successful transition to civilian life sometime emerge. Stress from active duty can interfere with the already difficult tasks of job searches and retraining, family reunification and coping with extreme changes in living environments.

Veteran between the ages of 18 and 30 are twice as likely to experience homelessness as those who did not serve their country.

We know that certain tools make the transition home more successful, but we haven't provided all of them to our returning veterans because we lack the resources.

HJR 29 provides a creative way to fund tools that help veterans and their families as they transition back to civilian life. Tools like:

- Veteran Service Officers who help connect veterans to the federal benefits they've earned
- Tuition support for furthering education
- Job training that prepares veterans for success in the work force
- A safe, affordable place to call home

Oregon is a place that embraces innovation and ingenuity. HJR 29 provides voters an opportunity to consider a creative solution to a problem we all have a duty to address.

For further information, please contact Ryan Fisher: ryan@nwpublicaffairs.com



Oregon's Heroes Need Tools for Successful Transitions HJR 26 creates a way to make sure those tools are available

Veterans face unique barriers when they come home.

Our armed forces willingly accept the responsibility of guarding our freedom. When they return home, some face new and unanticipated barriers to meeting their basic needs.

Too many veterans in Oregon struggle to find a safe, decent place to live as they integrate back into their communities. When we don't address these unique struggles, veterans and our communities face difficult realities.

- **1 in 6** people in Oregon's homeless shelters have served our country.¹
- Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who become homeless do so within **3 years** compared with 13 years for Vietnam-era veterans, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs.²
- Veterans working in some common jobs available through the Department of Labor's specialized training programs **don't earn enough to afford a median-priced home** in many Oregon communities.³

We need creative solutions

Veterans often face complicated barriers that make access to health care, job training, and reintegration into their communities difficult. We know that efforts to ensure that veterans are connected to the benefits that they've earned can have positive impacts on a veteran's ability to meet their basic needs, and overcome the barriers they may face to furthering their education and finding employment. We owe it to our veterans to make this effort; as it benefits veterans and it benefits our communities – when the state takes a pivotal role in assisting our veterans with reintegration, employment, education and health care.

Please consider creative solutions, like HJR 29, that will ensure that critical services are available to those who have served us, when we needed them.

The 22 agencies of Oregon Housing Authorities (OHA) are committed to providing safe and affordable housing to Oregonians facing income, disability or other life challenges.

We believe veterans, our children, seniors, and people with disabilities need a place to call home in order to be healthy and successful in life. Our members work collaboratively to bring increased visibility and a united voice for affordable housing to Oregon.

For more information, contact Ryan Fisher: ryan@nwpublicaffairs.com

¹ [HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan, March 27, 2012](#)

² US Department of Veterans Affairs

³ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Employment Situation of Veterans, 2011. Current Population Survey. Table 2A.