

HB 2037A Authorization to practice profession of spouse of active member of Armed Forces who transfers to Oregon

Testimony by Mark San Souci, 9 May 2013, for Oregon Senate Committee on Veterans and & Emergency Preparedness

Chair Boquist and committee, thank you for the opportunity to express Department of Defense support for HB 2037A to provide for military spouse license portability.

My name is Mark San Souci, Department of Defense Regional Liaison for Military Families for the Northwest, working for the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Family & Community Policy.

On behalf of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, thank you for the opportunity to discuss professional license help for military spouses who move to Oregon as part of the military family.

For 2013, this issue remains number two of the Department's ten key state issues addressing military family concerns; and has Presidential Administration support through the Joining Forces Initiative focusing on this issue for military families.

As with many transient and mobile careers today, most decisions to stay in the military are made around the kitchen table, and not in the personnel office. To retain our trained and experienced military, we must retain the family, even in an environment with downsizing as we adjust to ever changing national security strategies.

The Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) from last year is instructive on this issue. We know that 95% of military spouses are women. In a survey of active duty service members, 59% are married. That percentage increases to 72% for non commissioned officers and 73% for officers. As you know, NCOs and Officers possess the critical experience necessary for our professional armed forces. Over 70%-85% of their spouses say they want to work, or need to work.

We know from DMDC that the annual population of military spouses that moves across state lines is exponentially higher than civilians at 14.5 percent – compared to 1.1 % for civilian spouses.

Further, Oregon as of October 2012, had 933 active duty and 5,343 reserve military spouses, totaling 6,276. DMDC data shows around 53% of them are employed, making it around 3,326 spouses working in Oregon. We do know that up to 34% are licensed occupations, and even if you counted only the 933 active duty spouses, approximately 317 licensed spouses a year are subject to moving (counting guard/reserves it would be 1130). Most active duty spouses move every three years into and out of the state. Therefore, passing this legislation could help up to 120 active duty military professional spouses who move every year.

We particularly appreciate House Bill 2037A as amended because it includes teachers, since a February 2012 Defense Department-Treasury Department study reports PreK -12 teachers as the Number One occupation of military spouses, at 5.2 percent, followed by child care workers (3.9) and registered nurses (3.7), all occupations requiring certification or licensure.

As of right now, 34 states in the last three years have modified their policies to offer the licensing help of expediting the processing of

either a temporary or endorsed license, including Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Maryland, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming so far this session. Including Oregon, 7 more states are now taking up legislation to join them.

In closing, we are grateful for the tremendous support Oregon provides in support of our service members and their families, including the veterans academic and occupational credit bill last year and the others before that. Thank you to this committee for being a champion for us.

Thank you for taking up this issue in this committee and ask for a work session to move it forward and to passage this session. I stand by for any questions you may have.

Mark San Souci mark.sansouci@osd.mil 571-309-4622