



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, MD, Governor

Department of Veterans' Affairs

700 Summer St NE | Salem, OR 97301

800 828 8801 | www.oregon.gov/odva

February 3, 2015

Senator Alan Bates and Representative Nancy Nathanson, Co-Chairs
Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Sub-Committee on Human Services
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs and Committee Members,

You and your sub-committee have the difficult job of reviewing and recommending the budgets for numerous state agencies working across the field of human services. I'd like to add my voice of support for one small slice of that broad portfolio: the Long-Term Care Ombudsman (LTCO).

More than 52% of Oregon's veterans – over 167,000 – served in Vietnam, Korea and World War II. The youngest Vietnam veterans are approaching 60 years old. Our oldest WWII veterans are nearing 100.

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) is proud to operate two skilled nursing facilities in The Dalles and Lebanon to serve aging veterans and their families. Our partnership with LTCO helps improve our own operations, but more importantly, the LTCO statewide volunteer corps positively influences the care for thousands of veterans living in facilities across Oregon.

The creativity and leadership from the LTCO staff combined with the dedication and commitment of hundreds of volunteers is an impressive force multiplier. Together, they take limited state funds and leverage them to deliver outstanding results for our veterans and all aging Oregonians.

I urge approval of LTCO's requested budget and look forward to continuing our shared efforts to ensure veterans and their families thrive in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Cameron Smith
Director

Copy To:

Representative Deborah Boone
Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer
Representative Andy Olson
Representative Duane Stark
Senator Jackie Winters
Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward

