

March 3, 2015

Sen. Betsy Johnson, Rep. David Gomberg, Co-Chairs
Joint Committee on Ways and Means,
Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE,
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 5539

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the Committee,

My name is Diane McKeel, and I am a Multnomah County Commissioner and Chair of the Association of Oregon Counties Veterans Services Committee. I am testifying in support of SB 5539, and in particular to highlight the positive impact of payments to counties for veterans services and the Veterans' Extended Outreach Grant Program.

County Veterans Service Offices provide a critical function on behalf of veterans and their families in communities across the State of Oregon. Many veterans don't understand the benefits they are eligible for, whether it is medical care, college tuition, survivor benefits, or pension and disability payments. Furthermore, VA applications are often cumbersome and difficult to complete.

Our veterans have earned benefits through their service, and our County Veterans Service Officers provide the representation and expertise to help veterans and their families access them.

Oregon ranks in the top ten nationally in the awards for claims that our service officers make on behalf of veterans, with an average annual award of \$16,953 per veteran. The VA's own data shows that veterans who give Veteran Service Officers power of attorney receive more than double the disability benefits of veterans who file their own claims. In FY 13, VA expenditures in the State of Oregon totaled \$2.2 billion, and compensation and pension benefits alone was \$1.1 billion, which is essentially cash coming into our communities.

Along with my written testimony, I have submitted a VA Compensation and Pension chart with data from each county going back to 2005. Your investment in ODVA and our County Veterans Service Offices is making a difference. Since 2007, this investment

has helped increase our statewide disability compensation benefits by nearly 82%, which amounts to almost \$500 million of additional funds coming to Oregon.

This is the right thing to do for our service men and women, and it's a good investment for communities.

The Veterans' Extended Outreach Grant Program has been very successful, and we are connecting more veterans across the state with benefits that they have earned through their service. In Multnomah County, our Veterans Service Office has expanded its geographic reach to connect with more veterans at a variety of locations around the county, raised awareness about resources through a diverse advertising campaign, and conducted educational workshops for families and service providers.

It has been a successful program, and our experience in Multnomah County has been shared by my fellow AOC Veterans Committee members representing rural and urban counties throughout the state.

We have developed a strong partnership with ODVA through the AOC Veterans Committee, and I believe the relationship between counties and ODVA enables us to best serve our veterans.

Diane McKeel

County	Total # Veterans (2013)	2005 Compensation & Pension (in Thousands)	2007 Compensation & Pension (in Thousands)	2012 Compensation & Pension (In Thousands)
BAKER	1,936	\$3,313	\$3,718	\$ 6,251
BENTON	5,694	\$ 9,314	\$ 10,346	\$ 12,365
CLACKAMAS	34,848	\$ 40,207	\$ 42,319	\$ 65,891
CLATSOP	4,125	\$ 7,124	\$ 7,845	\$ 10,942
COLUMBIA	5,874	\$ 7,941	\$ 9,284	\$ 13,893
COOS	8,018	\$ 20,863	\$ 23,164	\$ 33,015
CROOK	2,458	\$ 3,140	\$ 3,735	\$ 6,541
CURRY	2,955	\$ 8,118	\$ 9,507	\$ 13,214
DESCHUTES	14,739	\$ 19,602	\$ 21,648	\$ 35,584
DOUGLAS	13,004	\$ 37,961	\$ 45,969	\$ 78,347
GILLIAM	244	\$ 243	\$ 311	\$ 671
GRANT	743	\$ 1,423	\$ 1,609	\$ 2,116
HARNEY	942	\$ 1,497	\$ 1,706	\$ 2,552
HOOD RIVER	1,665	\$ 1,904	\$ 2,222	\$ 3,896
JACKSON	20,551	\$ 39,777	\$ 44,438	\$ 73,238
JEFFERSON	2,077	\$ 2,416	\$ 3,105	\$ 6,118
JOSEPHINE	9,512	\$ 21,114	\$ 22,993	\$ 37,357
KLAMATH	6,908	\$ 19,301	\$ 21,536	\$ 31,323
LAKE	916	\$ 1,990	\$ 2,434	\$ 3,644
LANE	30,208	\$ 53,670	\$ 62,406	\$ 101,418
LINCOLN	5,136	\$ 11,947	\$ 12,187	\$ 17,681
LINN	11,757	\$ 20,388	\$ 22,864	\$ 36,957
MALHEUR	2,404	\$ 3,162	\$ 3,648	\$ 4,644
MARION	23,914	\$ 44,443	\$ 46,618	\$ 65,093
MORROW	1,019	\$ 1,123	\$ 1,176	\$ 2,362
MULTNOMAH	43,528	\$ 71,785	\$ 78,223	\$ 102,403
POLK	7,132	\$ 9,387	\$ 10,831	\$ 16,661
SHERMAN	282	\$ 492	\$ 614	\$ 854
TILLAMOOK	2,515	\$ 6,559	\$ 7,497	\$ 10,068
UMATILLA	5,932	\$ 10,884	\$ 12,512	\$ 18,571
UNION	2,446	\$ 3,792	\$ 4,494	\$ 7,386
WALLOWA	869	\$ 1,495	\$ 1,766	\$ 3,212
WASCO	3,170	\$ 4,401	\$ 4,608	\$ 7,317
WASHINGTON	35,265	\$ 40,883	\$ 45,095	\$ 73,256
WHEELER	239	\$ 254	\$ 300	\$ 420
YAMHILL	9,328	\$ 9,881	\$ 12,124	\$ 19,073
OREGON (Totals)	322,355	\$ 541,794	\$ 604,850	\$ 924,333

2013 Compensation & Pension (In Thousands)	Net Increase from 2007 to 2013	% Growth From 2007 13	% Growth From 2012 13
\$ 7,570	\$ 3,851,507	103.6%	17.4%
\$ 14,214	\$ 3,868,052	37.4%	13.0%
\$ 80,115	\$ 37,796,041	89.3%	17.8%
\$ 12,521	\$ 4,676,320	59.6%	12.6%
\$ 16,693	\$ 7,408,533	79.8%	16.8%
\$ 40,187	\$ 17,022,813	73.5%	17.8%
\$ 7,507	\$ 3,772,041	101.0%	12.9%
\$ 16,566	\$ 7,058,725	74.2%	20.2%
\$ 44,073	\$ 22,424,859	103.6%	19.3%
\$ 92,649	\$ 46,679,722	101.5%	15.4%
\$ 726	\$ 415,699	133.9%	7.6%
\$ 2,432	\$ 823,218	51.2%	13.0%
\$ 2,946	\$ 1,240,078	72.7%	13.4%
\$ 4,366	\$ 2,143,904	96.5%	10.8%
\$ 88,303	\$ 43,864,435	98.7%	17.1%
\$ 7,911	\$ 4,805,280	154.7%	22.7%
\$ 45,791	\$ 22,798,533	99.2%	18.4%
\$ 36,963	\$ 15,427,412	71.6%	15.3%
\$ 4,246	\$ 1,811,687	74.4%	14.2%
\$ 119,947	\$ 57,540,946	92.2%	15.4%
\$ 21,261	\$ 9,073,176	74.4%	16.8%
\$ 44,319	\$ 21,454,170	93.8%	16.6%
\$ 5,805	\$ 2,157,478	59.1%	20.0%
\$ 75,082	\$ 28,464,343	61.1%	13.3%
\$ 2,630	\$ 1,453,922	123.7%	10.2%
\$ 118,732	\$ 40,509,264	51.8%	13.8%
\$ 19,677	\$ 8,846,058	81.7%	15.3%
\$ 786	\$ 171,781	28.0%	(8.7%)
\$ 11,646	\$ 4,148,750	55.3%	13.5%
\$ 21,196	\$ 8,683,785	69.4%	12.4%
\$ 9,068	\$ 4,574,486	101.8%	18.6%
\$ 3,520	\$ 1,753,862	99.3%	8.8%
\$ 7,602	\$ 2,994,720	65.0%	3.7%
\$ 89,410	\$ 44,315	98.3%	18.1%
\$ 626	\$ 326,313	108.7%	32.9%
\$ 23,204	\$ 11,079,940	91.4%	17.8%
\$ 1,100,287	\$ 495,436,920	81.9%	19.0%

County	Number of Vets	Total CVSO Staff (FTE)	CVSO Staff	CVSO Staffing Per 1000 Vets	Targeted Staff	New Staff Increase	New POAs in 2014
BAKER	1,936	0.8	1	0.52			
BENTON	5,694		1	0.18	1.42	0.42	
CLACKAMAS	34,848		3	0.09	8.71	5.71	
CLATSOP	4,125		1	0.24			
COLUMBIA	5,874		1	0.17	1.47	0.47	
COOS	8,018		2	0.25			
CROOK	2,458		2	0.81			
CURRY	2,955		1	0.34			
DESCHUTES	14,739		2	0.14	3.68	1.68	
DOUGLAS	13,004		3	0.23			
GILLIAM	244		1	4.09			
GRANT	743		1	1.35			
HARNEY	942		1	1.06			
HOOD RIVER	1,665		1	0.60			
JACKSON	20,551		3	0.15	5.14	2.14	
JEFFERSON	2,077		1	0.48			
JOSEPHINE	9,512		1	0.11	2.38	1.38	
KLAMATH	6,908		2	0.29			
LAKE	916		1	1.09			
LANE	30,208		3	0.10	7.55	4.55	
LINCOLN	5,136		1	0.19	1.28	0.28	
LINN	11,757		2	0.17	2.94	0.94	
MALHEUR	2,404		1	0.42			
MARION	23,914		1	0.04	5.98	4.98	
MORROW	1,019		1	0.98			
MULTNOMAH	43,528		3	0.07	10.88	7.88	
POLK	7,132		1	0.14	1.78	0.78	
SHERMAN	282		1	3.55			
TILLAMOOK	2,515		2	0.80			
UMATILLA	5,932		2	0.34			
UNION	2,446		3	1.23			
WALLOWA	869		1	1.15			
WASCO	3,170		1	0.32			

WASHINGTON	35,265	6	0.17	8.82	2.82
WHEELER	239	1	4.19		
YAMHILL	9,328	1	0.11	2.33	1.33
OREGON (Total)	322,355	60	0.19	80.59	35.37

80.6

Marker is 1
CVSO per
4000 vets or
.25 per 1000



targeted if
below .15

Lead Commissioner (*on AOC Vets Committee)	New 2013 POA/Vets Ratio	VetCenter	CBOC	Outpatient Clinic	VA Medical Center
Schrader*				West Linn	
			Warrenton		
Heimuller*					
Sweet*			North Bend		
Fahlgren*			Brookings		
		Bend	Bend		
Laurence*					Roseburg
Judge Shaffer*					
Labhart*				Burns	
Skundrck*					White City
			Grants Pass		
			K Falls		
Farr*		Eugene	Eugene		
Hall*				Newport	
Lindsey*					
		Salem	Salem		
			Boardman		
			Telehealth		
			Clinic		
McKeel*		Portland	East Portland		Portland Community Resource and Referral Center
Roberts*			LaGrande		
			Enterprise		
			Telehealth		
Runyon*			Clinic	The Dalles	

Hillsboro

George*