



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Veterans' Affairs

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March 25, 2015

Senator Chip Shields and Representative Jennifer Williamson, Co-Chairs
Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Sub-Committee on Public Safety
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs Shields and Williamson,

You and your sub-committee have the difficult job of reviewing and recommending the budgets for numerous state agencies working across the field of public safety. I'd like to add my voice of support for one small slice of that broad portfolio: an Elder Abuse Resource Prosecutor for the Oregon Department of Justice (DOJ).

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 serve our veterans as they age and ensure they receive the benefits they have earned through their service. Our veteran service officers both at the county and state level work hard to ensure veterans are connected to a broad array of public and private resources for their health, well-being and economic security.

DOJ's proposed Elder Abuse Resource Prosecutor would be an essential addition to these resources aimed at preventing the victimization of older veterans and citizens by perpetrators with whom they have an ongoing and trusting relationship. The position is well aimed to creatively coordinate and leverage partners to positively increase awareness, training, prevention, and detection and prosecution of elder abuse.

I urge approval of DOJ's request for an Elder Abuse Resource Prosecutor and look forward to continuing our shared efforts to ensure veterans and their families thrive in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Cameron Smith
Director

