

March 26, 2015

Representative Brad Witt,

Please find written testimony attached in support of your HB 3116 to be entered in the record at the hearing today. I apologize for my inability to come to Salem to testify in person, but health problems limit my activities for a bit.

I am absolutely convinced that this committee will provide unanimous support of the creation of a Task Force to study this concept. As you might know, my Father sustained a permanent and total work injury in 1962, falling from a roof and losing his sight. I have lived closely within the life of a severely disabled injured worker. I am a Vietnam veteran with a current 40% service connected disability. I worked for 42 years with a major Oregon employer handling their Workers' Compensation programs. I was intimately involved with the historic Oregon Work Comp reform in 1990 and appointed to the Workers' Compensation Advisory Committee serving as co-chair with you in the mid-1990's. I have served on the Executive Board and President of the Oregon Self-insurers Association. We discussed this Preferred Worker Program with leadership in the Oregon Guard at one of our Association meetings a few years ago and I made a presentation on this subject to the Oregon State Veteran's Advisory Committee (making contact with Irv Fletcher). I can safely say my experiences give me a very broad based working knowledge of Oregon Workers' Compensation, the injured workers and injured military personnel. There is no reason why we should not or cannot make the Preferred Worker Program available to our Oregon service personnel with disabilities.

As I think about the timeline, passage of this bill that creates an advisory committee with a no later than 9/15/2016 deadline to submit a report and recommendations. After that is completed it would be a bill in the 2017 legislative session. After passage of that bill, WCD would commence the administrative rule process with a possible 2018 enactment of the program. I believe we cannot wait three more years to assist our Oregon National Guard members. I believe the designated members of this Task Force can work much more quickly than expected and get this program up and running by the end of the next Legislative session.

I deeply appreciate you talking on this project and hope you will let me help you and the task force move this concept to completion.

Sincerely,

Mark J. Davison
503 593-8135