

**Testimony of Randy Tucker, Legislative Affairs Manager
In Support of Senate Bill 87
House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness
May 19, 2015**



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Chair Lively and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony in support of Senate Bill 87. This bill is necessary because it provides much needed guidance to public employers in how to practically ensure that veterans and disabled veterans receive preference in the selection process for competitive positions.

SB 87 clarifies existing law by providing simple and clear definitions for a number of key terms. For example, the bill makes clear that “competitive position” does not include an assignment or transfer. This clarification eliminates confusion among key stakeholders—public employers, veterans and the Bureau of Labor & Industries—regarding whether an “assignment” constitutes a “promotion” and whether the competitive process alone is sufficient to trigger the obligation to provide the preference. Such clarity is lacking in the statute as currently written and has unfortunately resulted in unnecessary litigation. The clarity provided by SB 87 is critically needed for the effective implementation of the law going forward.

SB 87 also addresses the reality that many public employers, like Metro, do not use a testing and scoring method in the selection process. Under the current statute, application of the preference to veterans and disabled veterans is very difficult to quantify in the absence of a points-based system. SB 87 offers a method for public employers to apply the preference even in the absence of a testing and scoring process. Indeed, the bill outlines a clear and comprehensible approach to applying the preference in a sorted or ranked selection process, which is an alternative method to the tested and scored selection process.

In sum, SB 87 clarifies existing law and provides a clear and uniform method to ensure veterans and disabled veterans are provided special consideration during the hiring and promotion process.

We urge you to pass SB 87.