

**AOC Veterans Testimony for House Committee on Human Services and Housing
February 17, 2016**

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3 Main Themes to Share

1. We must to Continue to Grow and Maximize Utilization of Federal VA Earned Benefits, including:

- Compensation and Pension;
- VA Health Care; and
- Housing.

2. In an era of limited GF dollars, taking more steps to increase access to these federal resources we be some of the wisest investments we can make; the ROI is phenomenal----not even including the \$1 billion of VA health care dollars spent in Oregon each year:

- **\$1.3 billion of VA Federal \$'s came to Oregon in 2014 for "Compensation and Pension" payments to veterans and surviving family members; this amount has more than doubled since 2007 (when the total was \$605 million)**
- **To put this in perspective, more than twice the annual amount of EITC**
- **\$182 million of new Compensation and Pension federal dollars which came into Oregon in 2014;**
- **The ROI for this new \$, based on a state General Fund investment of \$4.7 million for CVSO's was 77.4 to 1 ;**
- **For the 2015-17 Biennium, this growth will likely bring about \$364 million of new VA dollars which go directly to individual vets and family members.**

3. Earned Benefits are a Huge Federal Resource of Economic Development and Can Help Address Housing Challenges in All of Oregon's Counties:

- the average monthly disability and compensation payments for the 67,046 Oregon Veterans who receive compensation and pension benefits is: \$19,128 per year;
- or \$1,594 per month;
- These federal dollars provide an invaluable tool for the Legislature help to reduce homeless and housing instability for veterans.

Basics of our Work at AOC

- Support and employ County Veterans Service Officers across the state
- CVSO's are a front-line asset: they help unlock byzantine VA systems so vets can obtain the disability, healthcare and other benefits they have earned and deserve
- The range of benefits is very large and often complex; Disability Claims can often take a year or more to be resolved; commonplace appeals are confusing and overwhelming for individuals who don't understand VA system
- Very specific training is needed to become CVSO; it takes 12-18 months on the job to become accredited by federal government
- CVSO's are skilled advocates in a complex administrative environment

Housing Opportunity: Helping More Veterans Access their Earned VA Benefits Can Play A Huge Part in Oregon's Efforts to Address our Statewide Housing Crisis

- As noted, the average compensation and pension earned benefit in Oregon is \$1,594 per month; this is an incredible potential source of income for veterans facing housing affordability and instability challenges; getting more of these federal dollars will allow our limited state housing dollars to serve more Oregonians
- As part our state's housing strategy, we should intensify efforts to unlock access to federal veterans earned benefits that are currently available but under-utilized
- Oregon is a national leader in the level of VA/Federal Expenditures that flow to veterans; about 30% of vets access benefits....but we have an opportunity to make that number bigger 35%? 40%? Can we be more like Oklahoma the national leader in maximizing veterans' access to Compensation and Pension benefits
- Federal dollars coming to Oregon have almost doubled since 2007
- **The Opportunity:** If we could be more like Oklahoma, we could secure \$1 billion more per biennium in "Compensation and Pension benefits to our veterans and their families
- VA benefits provide a huge local economic development impact; this is not a "one time boost".....these are predominantly lifelong benefits
- Who is the "key-master" for access to these benefits? CVSO's can "break" the VA benefits codes that means real dollars for vets, families and our communities

FY14 Summary of Expenditures by State
Expenditures in \$000s

County/ Congressional District	Veteran Population*	Total Expenditure	Compensation & Pension	Construction	Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment	Loan Guaranty#	General Operating Expenses	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care	Unique Patients**
BAKER	1,959	\$ 16,508	\$ 8,982	\$ -	\$ 207	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 62	\$ 7,256	871
BENTON	6,109	\$ 29,175	\$ 16,536	\$ -	\$ 4,288	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 471	\$ 7,880	1,202
CLACKAMAS	35,601	\$ 188,546	\$ 95,785	\$ -	\$ 12,427	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,318	\$ 78,016	7,455
CLATSOP	4,298	\$ 29,747	\$ 15,179	\$ -	\$ 1,375	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 739	\$ 12,454	1,196
COLUMBIA	6,048	\$ 40,816	\$ 20,425	\$ -	\$ 2,069	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 270	\$ 18,051	1,694
COOS	8,427	\$ 75,952	\$ 44,914	\$ -	\$ 1,819	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 368	\$ 28,851	2,852
CROOK	2,604	\$ 17,162	\$ 9,433	\$ -	\$ 498	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 31	\$ 7,199	1,064
CURRY	2,999	\$ 31,886	\$ 18,819	\$ -	\$ 252	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 97	\$ 12,718	1,306
DESCHUTES	15,343	\$ 96,373	\$ 54,113	\$ -	\$ 8,861	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 933	\$ 32,465	5,140
DOUGLAS	13,501	\$ 224,421	\$ 105,501	\$ 12,917	\$ 2,739	\$ -	\$ 849	\$ 675	\$ 101,738	7,009
GILLIAM	238	\$ 1,473	\$ 1,037	\$ -	\$ 1	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1	\$ 433	80
GRANT	767	\$ 5,131	\$ 2,999	\$ -	\$ 60	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 59	\$ 2,013	297
HARNEY	910	\$ 5,913	\$ 3,177	\$ -	\$ 19	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 97	\$ 2,621	335
HOOD RIVER	1,672	\$ 9,896	\$ 5,450	\$ -	\$ 368	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 93	\$ 3,985	416
JACKSON	21,079	\$ 222,878	\$ 100,318	\$ 5,354	\$ 7,230	\$ -	\$ 2,967	\$ 1,663	\$ 105,346	8,814
JEFFERSON	2,212	\$ 15,134	\$ 9,800	\$ -	\$ 613	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 40	\$ 4,681	707
JOSEPHINE	9,759	\$ 89,711	\$ 53,234	\$ -	\$ 2,739	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 818	\$ 32,920	3,823
KLAMATH	6,966	\$ 65,767	\$ 41,764	\$ -	\$ 3,384	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 385	\$ 20,234	2,981
LAKE	906	\$ 8,312	\$ 5,345	\$ -	\$ 203	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5	\$ 2,758	379
LANE	30,519	\$ 238,568	\$ 140,515	\$ -	\$ 15,363	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,252	\$ 80,438	9,953
LINCOLN	5,352	\$ 40,789	\$ 23,723	\$ -	\$ 700	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 291	\$ 16,076	1,801
LINN	12,248	\$ 87,642	\$ 51,727	\$ -	\$ 5,018	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 569	\$ 30,329	3,320
MALHEUR	2,472	\$ 14,167	\$ 6,485	\$ -	\$ 643	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 99	\$ 6,941	652
MARION	25,086	\$ 159,023	\$ 87,365	\$ -	\$ 9,706	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,134	\$ 59,817	6,038
MORROW	1,078	\$ 6,986	\$ 3,407	\$ -	\$ 108	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 495	\$ 2,976	321
MULTNOMAH	44,378	\$ 390,044	\$ 135,578	\$ 853	\$ 31,049	\$ -	\$ 31,781	\$ 4,555	\$ 186,229	12,494
POLK	7,521	\$ 44,240	\$ 23,696	\$ -	\$ 3,167	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 484	\$ 16,893	1,629
SHERMAN	287	\$ 1,726	\$ 931	\$ -	\$ 66	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3	\$ 725	89
TILLAMOOK	2,499	\$ 22,292	\$ 13,052	\$ -	\$ 414	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 179	\$ 8,646	900
UMATILLA	6,073	\$ 46,997	\$ 24,013	\$ -	\$ 1,456	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 168	\$ 21,359	2,199
UNION	2,507	\$ 20,505	\$ 10,251	\$ -	\$ 1,074	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 196	\$ 8,983	1,035
WALLOWA	870	\$ 6,710	\$ 4,040	\$ -	\$ 47	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 68	\$ 2,555	351
WASCO	3,071	\$ 16,744	\$ 8,969	\$ -	\$ 510	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 82	\$ 7,184	866
WASHINGTON	36,207	\$ 218,316	\$ 106,769	\$ -	\$ 20,610	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,221	\$ 88,716	8,189
WHEELER	225	\$ 1,014	\$ 610	\$ -	\$ 1	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2	\$ 402	74
YAMHILL	9,841	\$ 52,272	\$ 28,505	\$ -	\$ 3,265	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 489	\$ 20,013	1,970
OREGON (Totals)	331,632	\$ 2,542,834	\$ 1,282,449	\$ 19,124	\$ 142,348	\$ -	\$ 35,597	\$ 23,413	\$ 1,039,903	99,502

CONG. DIST (01)	59,286	\$ 357,627	\$ 177,400	\$ -	\$ 28,816	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,301	\$ 147,110	13,784
CONG. DIST (02)	77,242	\$ 630,535	\$ 331,430	\$ 5,323	\$ 26,909	\$ -	\$ 2,967	\$ 5,041	\$ 258,866	28,943
CONG. DIST (03)	50,532	\$ 417,900	\$ 151,790	\$ 853	\$ 32,415	\$ -	\$ 31,781	\$ 4,491	\$ 196,571	13,591
CONG. DIST (04)	76,724	\$ 720,833	\$ 397,860	\$ 12,948	\$ 29,859	\$ -	\$ 849	\$ 4,653	\$ 274,662	27,003
CONG. DIST (05)	67,849	\$ 415,939	\$ 223,970	\$ -	\$ 24,349	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,927	\$ 162,693	16,181
OREGON (Totals)	331,632	\$ 2,542,834	\$ 1,282,449	\$ 19,124	\$ 142,348	\$ -	\$ 35,597	\$ 23,413	\$ 1,039,903	99,502
Notes:										
* Veteran population estimates, as of September 30, 2014, are produced by the VA Office of the Actuary (VetPop 2014).										
# Prior to FY 08, "Loan Guaranty" expenditures were included in the Education & Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (E&VRE) programs. Currently, all "Loan Guaranty" expenditures are attributed to Travis County, TX, where all Loan Guaranty payments are processed. VA will continue to improve data collection for future GDY reports to better distribute loan expenditures at the state, county and congressional district levels.										
** Unique patients are patients who received treatment at a VA health care facility. Data are provided by the Allocation Resource Center (ARC).										
Expenditure data sources: USASpending.gov for Compensation & Pension (C&P) and Education and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (EYRE) Benefits; Veterans Benefits Administration Insurance Center for the Insurance costs; the VA Financial Management System (FMS) for Construction, Medical Research, General Operating Expenses, and certain C&P and Readjustment data; and the Allocation Resource Center (ARC) for Medical Care costs.										
1. Expenditures are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars. For example, \$500 to \$1,000 are rounded to \$1; \$0 to \$499 are rounded to \$0; and "\$-" = 0 or no expenditures.										
2. The Compensation & Pension expenditures include dollars for the following programs: veterans' compensation for service-connected disabilities; dependency and indemnity compensation for service-connected deaths; veterans' pension for nonservice-connected disabilities; and burial and other benefits to veterans and their survivors.										
3. Medical Care expenditures include dollars for medical services, medical administration, facility maintenance, educational support, research support, and other overhead items. Medical Care expenditures do not include dollars for construction or other non-medical support.										
4. Medical Care expenditures are based on where patients live instead of where care is delivered.										
5. A star symbol (*) in the Unique Patients column denotes that there were less than 10 Unique Patients.										

County	Total # Veterans (2014)	2007 Compensation & Pension (in Thousands)	2014 Compensation & Pension (in Thousands)	Growth in Compensation and Pension from 2007 to 2014
BAKER	1,959	\$3,718	\$ 8,982	141.6%
BENTON	6,109	\$ 10,346	\$ 16,536	59.8%
CLACKAMAS	35,601	\$ 42,319	\$ 95,785	126.3%
CLATSOP	4,298	\$ 7,845	\$ 15,179	93.5%
COLUMBIA	6,048	\$ 9,284	\$ 20,425	120.0%
COOS	8,427	\$ 23,164	\$ 44,914	93.9%
CROOK	2,604	\$ 3,735	\$ 9,433	152.5%
CURRY	2,999	\$ 9,507	\$ 18,819	97.9%
DESCHUTES	15,343	\$ 21,648	\$ 54,113	150.0%
DOUGLAS	13,501	\$ 45,969	\$ 105,501	129.5%
GILLIAM	238	\$ 311	\$ 1,037	234.0%
GRANT	767	\$ 1,609	\$ 2,999	86.4%
HARNEY	910	\$ 1,706	\$ 3,177	86.2%
HOOD RIVER	1,672	\$ 2,222	\$ 5,450	145.3%
JACKSON	21,079	\$ 44,438	\$ 100,318	125.7%
JEFFERSON	2,212	\$ 3,105	\$ 9,800	215.6%
JOSEPHINE	9,759	\$ 22,993	\$ 53,234	131.5%
KLAMATH	6,966	\$ 21,536	\$ 41,764	93.9%
LAKE	906	\$ 2,434	\$ 5,345	119.6%
LANE	30,519	\$ 62,406	\$ 140,515	125.2%
LINCOLN	5,352	\$ 12,187	\$ 23,723	94.6%
LINN	12,248	\$ 22,864	\$ 51,727	126.2%
MALHEUR	2,472	\$ 3,648	\$ 6,485	77.8%
MARION	25,086	\$ 46,618	\$ 87,365	87.4%
MORROW	1,078	\$ 1,176	\$ 3,407	189.8%
MULTNOMAH	44,378	\$ 78,223	\$ 135,578	73.3%
POLK	7,521	\$ 10,831	\$ 23,696	118.8%
SHERMAN	287	\$ 614	\$ 931	51.7%
TILLAMOOK	2,499	\$ 7,497	\$ 13,052	74.1%
UMATILLA	6,073	\$ 12,512	\$ 24,013	91.9%
UNION	2,507	\$ 4,494	\$ 10,251	128.1%
WALLOWA	870	\$ 1,766	\$ 4,040	128.7%
WASCO	3,071	\$ 4,608	\$ 8,969	94.6%
WASHINGTON	36,207	\$ 45,095	\$ 106,769	136.8%
WHEELER	225	\$ 300	\$ 610	103.2%
YAMHILL	9,841	\$ 12,124	\$ 28,505	135.1%
Oregon Total	331,632	\$ 604,849	\$ 1,282,449	112.0%

County	Total # Veterans (2014)	2013	2014	Annual Growth	Percent Increase
BAKER	1,959	\$7,569,898	\$8,982,397	\$1,412,499	18.7%
BENTON	6,109	\$14,214,123	\$16,536,268	\$2,322,145	16.3%
CLACKAMAS	35,601	\$80,114,735	\$95,785,224	\$15,670,489	19.6%
CLATSOP	4,298	\$12,520,927	\$15,178,979	\$2,658,052	21.2%
COLUMBIA	6,048	\$16,692,598	\$20,425,398	\$3,732,800	22.4%
COOS	8,427	\$40,186,674	\$44,913,551	\$4,726,877	11.8%
CROOK	2,604	\$7,507,000	\$9,432,641	\$1,925,641	25.7%
CURRY	2,999	\$16,565,862	\$18,818,773	\$2,252,911	13.6%
DESCHUTES	15,343	\$44,072,522	\$54,113,476	\$10,040,954	22.8%
DOUGLAS	13,501	\$92,648,601	\$105,501,400	\$12,852,799	13.9%
GILLIAM	238	\$726,261	\$1,037,298	\$311,037	42.8%
GRANT	767	\$2,432,081	\$2,999,017	\$566,936	23.3%
HARNEY	910	\$2,946,418	\$3,176,690	\$230,272	7.8%
HOOD RIVER	1,672	\$4,366,067	\$5,449,869	\$1,083,802	24.8%
JACKSON	21,079	\$88,302,714	\$100,318,282	\$12,015,568	13.6%
JEFFERSON	2,212	\$7,910,504	\$9,799,965	\$1,889,461	23.9%
JOSEPHINE	9,759	\$45,791,182	\$53,234,183	\$7,443,001	16.3%
KLAMATH	6,966	\$36,963,249	\$41,764,412	\$4,801,163	13.0%
LAKE	906	\$4,245,687	\$5,345,443	\$1,099,756	25.9%
LANE	30,519	\$119,946,944	\$140,514,597	\$20,567,653	17.1%
LINCOLN	5,352	\$21,260,567	\$23,722,581	\$2,462,014	11.6%
LINN	12,248	\$44,318,594	\$51,726,853	\$7,408,259	16.7%
MALHEUR	2,472	\$5,805,148	\$6,484,695	\$679,547	11.7%
MARION	25,086	\$75,081,866	\$87,365,291	\$12,283,425	16.4%
MORROW	1,078	\$2,629,574	\$3,407,363	\$777,789	29.6%
MULTNOMAH	44,378	\$118,732,023	\$135,578,118	\$16,846,095	14.2%
POLK	7,521	\$19,676,919	\$23,696,129	\$4,019,210	20.4%
SHERMAN	287	\$785,589	\$931,330	\$145,741	18.6%
TILLAMOOK	2,499	\$11,646,177	\$13,052,277	\$1,406,100	12.1%
UMATILLA	6,073	\$21,195,921	\$24,013,183	\$2,817,262	13.3%
UNION	2,507	\$9,068,091	\$10,251,086	\$1,182,995	13.0%
WALLOWA	870	\$3,519,918	\$4,039,545	\$519,627	14.8%
WASCO	3,071	\$7,602,396	\$8,968,708	\$1,366,312	18.0%
WASHINGTON	36,207	\$89,409,675	\$106,769,453	\$17,359,778	19.4%
WHEELER	225	\$626,385	\$609,725	-\$16,660	-2.7%
YAMHILL	9,841	\$23,203,586	\$28,505,163	\$5,301,577	22.8%
OREGON (Totals)	331,632	\$1,100,286,476	\$1,282,449,363	\$182,162,887	16.6%