

April 13, 2017

**Senate Veterans and Emergency Preparedness Committee
Senate Bill 1055 Briefing**

Since September 11, 2001 there has been a sharp increase in the number of family law cases that involve a parent who has been or will be deployed in military service. In response, many states enacted legislation to ensure family law judges treat the mothers and fathers who serve in our Armed Forces fairly. Absent these laws, family courts have disregarded servicemember's parental rights to the detriment of their children. SB 1055 ensures that when a mother or father is deployed in service to our country Oregon's courts recognize and respect their parental rights and act in the best interests of their children.

SB 1055 will:

- Ensure a parent's absence due to military obligation will not automatically result in the termination of their parental rights.
- Prioritizes the scheduling of family law matters when a parent is deployed or a deployment is imminent.
- Ensure all custody modifications resulting from a parent's military obligation are temporary and made without prejudice.
- Allow judges the discretion to grant visitation with non-parents (including step-parents) during the servicemember's deployment to promote stability and frequent contact with the deployed parent.

Many states already provide these protections for military families, including Washington and California. Please support Oregon's military families by enacting SB 1055.

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