



OREGON STATE SENATE

Chair Boquist and Members of the Veterans and Emergency Preparedness Committee,

My name is Senator Tim Knopp and I am writing in support of Senate Bill 1054. It's clear that Oregon needs more inpatient health beds, particularly for veterans and military families. We shouldn't allow the Certificate of Need to become a political obstacle that does not support the best interests of service members.

Last year, the College of Public Health and Human Services at Oregon State University released a report to the Oregon Health Authority entitled, "ED Boarding of Psychiatric Patients in Oregon." The authors found that, "a greater supply of psychiatric inpatient and intensive community mental health resources was significantly associated with a reduction in the probability of a psychiatric ED visit. A 1% increase in psychiatric inpatient capacity may lead to a 7% decrease in the probability of a psychiatric ED visit."

Senate Bill 1054 will reduce the barriers to the construction of new inpatient psychiatric facilities and thereby directly reduce psychiatric visits to emergency rooms across Oregon.


Veterans make up 8.7% of Oregon's population but nearly 23% of suicides. Over 30,000 Oregonians have fought for our country in Iraq or Afghanistan, and 20% of these veterans suffer from PTSD and or some form of Depression. It is imperative that we do everything in our power to ensure that Oregon veterans and service members are able to obtain the care that they need. Our service men and women deserve better than to be boarded into an emergency room when they face a psychiatric crisis.

For nearly two decades, leaders in government, healthcare and the advocate community have sounded alarm bells over Oregon's lack of adequate mental health services. There are countless examples of emergency room boarding, and we are seeing the effects of Oregon's mental health crisis reflected in addiction, homelessness, suicide, and domestic violence.

That is why Senate Bill 1054 is so important, because it would lift a significant barrier to the construction of new inpatient psychiatric facilities and allow facilities to be built that will serve the needs of veterans and members of our military.

I respectfully ask you to support Senate Bill 1054. Thank you.

Best regards,



Senator Tim Knopp