



**Military and Veteran Resources**

Oregon State University, 137 Snell Hall, Corvallis, Oregon 97331  
T 541-737-7662 | F 541-737-9160 | <http://studentlife.oregonstate.edu/veterans>

15 February 2017

Testimony in Support of SB143

The military spends millions of dollars and invests years of time to mold young service members into highly effective members of a team. It is more than a job, it is a way of life and becomes a way that these service members define who they are. When they leave the service, the military invests about a week supplying them with the tools needed to transition back to the civilian world.

During this transitional time, many of these young Americans enter higher education and have to learn how they fit in and how to be successful. A campus Veterans' Center is a valuable investment to assist them in making a successful transition between these two very different worlds and enhance their chance of achieving their academic goals.

A properly staffed Veterans' Center can provide the needed assistance in navigating the many different institutional, state, and federal benefits that may apply to their specific situation, it can also provide a comfortable place for them to work on their courses in between classes since most commute to campus, a place to connect to other students that are facing similar challenges, and a place to connect as a part of a community.

I have the privilege of serving the more than 1200 service members, veterans, and their family members attending Oregon State University (OSU). In addition to serving those already attending OSU, I spend a portion of my time assisting service members and veterans who are trying to put all the pieces in place so that they or one of their family members can take the step into higher education.

At Oregon State University, we are lucky. Thanks to President Ray, the Office of the Dean of Student Life, and others, we have one fully funded position in Corvallis and are soon to hire for a part time FTE position at the Cascades Campus. We have some allocated space on campus, that through the contributions of some gracious donors, we have been able to complete some minor upgrades. Though we are more fortunate than some of the other institutions in the state, there is still much work to be done before we are able to provide the level of support services that our students deserve.

The passage of this bill would provide greater opportunities for all the service members, veterans, and their families that are pursuing higher education in the State of Oregon. Thank you.

WILLIAM ELFERING  
Military and Veteran Resource Advisor  
Oregon State University