

February 05, 2018

LETTER OF SUPPORT

FROM: Thomas Etienne <thomas.etienne@protonmail.com>

TO: House Committee On Human Services and Housing,
<hhs.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov>

CC: Chair Alissa Keny-Guyer <rep.alissakenyguyer@oregonlegislature.gov>,
Vice Chair Andy Olson <rep.andyolson@oregonlegislature.gov>,
Vice Chair Tawna Sanchez <rep.tawnasanchez@oregonlegislature.gov>,
Rep. Duane Stark <rep.duanestark@oregonlegislature.gov>,
Rep. Mike Nearman <rep.mikenearman@oregonlegislature.gov>,
Rep. Ron Noble <rep.ronnoble@oregonlegislature.gov>,
Rep. Chris Gorsek <rep.chrisgorsek@oregonlegislature.gov>
Rep. Carla Piluso <rep.carlapiluso@oregonlegislature.gov>
Rep. Mark Meek <rep.markmeek@oregonlegislature.gov>

SUBJECT: Oregon Veterans Support for House Bill 4007

1. Hello, my name is Thomas Etienne. I am a private citizen and Army veteran recently returned to Oregon communicating on my own behalf about the security and well-being of our state. Additionally, I have been given approval to include the names of the following US military veterans currently living in Oregon:

- a. Albert Lee, United States Army (veteran) - Portland, Oregon
- b. Matthew Ruddell, United States Army (veteran) - Portland, Oregon
- c. Cindy Smith, United States Air Force (retired) - Portland, Oregon
- d. Gabriel Vaught, United States Army (reserves) - Aloha, Oregon

2. We are writing to encourage all members of the House Committee On Human Services and Housing to support House Bill 4007. Based on my observations after returning to Oregon in 2016, I have been struck deeply by the increased amount of homelessness facing so many of our residents. Having served in uniform for 8-years in our post-9/11 wartime era, it is painful and infuriating for me to know that many of such residents are also fellow veterans. The sacrifice and commitment that was asked of those who served in uniform deserves to be reflected back with a similar degree of commitment in our public policymaking. If the obligation to protect our citizens' most basic welfare were treated with even half the passion and prestige that our military regularly receives at public events then I don't believe the question of generating revenue for housing assistance would even be a debate. It would simply be a matter of proper due diligence to make sure those who are facing increased economic and health risks are able to live with dignity in the richest nation on the planet.

SUBJECT: Oregon Veterans Support for House Bill 4007

3. In closing, we support raising the document recording fee as a prudent step towards funding housing assistance. We fully support the stated pledge that 25% of housing assistance program efforts funded via HB 4007 will be specifically allocated towards supporting veterans.

4. This letter was written on short notice and we ask that it be given due consideration during the proceedings for HB 4007. Additional supporters may add their names later and I will endeavor to include them as a supplement to this letter. It is understood that government itself doesn't bear the burden of organizing public support, but we wish to thank Representative Keny-Guyer for actively disseminating information on this bill and working to increase understanding about its potential benefits. Without that effort we would not have had the information needed to provide any timely input. Given the fragile state of trust in government at all levels, we hope that new and reinvigorated strategies for public engagement are receiving determined attention from all of our lawmakers.

Respectfully,



Thomas Etienne