



## THE OREGON STUDENT ASSOCIATION

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**TO:** Senate Education Committee  
**FROM:** William Iversen  
**SUBJECT:** SB 1557  
**DATE:** February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Chair Reardon and Members of the Committee:

I am a senior at the University of Oregon studying political science. I am also a member of the Marine Corps Reserve, and have been in the military for nearly six years. During this time, I have balanced school with my military obligations, alongside my student jobs and my roles in student government. Balancing obligations is hard for any student who is highly involved on campus, but students in the military Reserves and the National Guard face additional obligations which are highly inflexible, and can pose a challenge to their education.

My military obligations are drill one weekend a month, and a two week training exercise in the summer. Often, that drill weekend ends up being field training that goes from Thursday through Sunday, 5am to 9pm, which causes me to miss class, sometimes including exams. It also makes study very difficult if an exam ends up being right after the weekend training, where there is often no down time where I can study to try to excel on my exams. Sometimes these weekend trainings can make completing assignments which have a short turnaround time very difficult as well.

On two occasions, my summer training has overlapped with finals week in such a way that I needed to ask my instructors to compress my finals into dead week or the first day of finals week. These trainings also compressed my timeline for completing final papers, while accelerating my study timelines for the other finals.

It's very hard to quantify exactly how much my military obligations have impacted my academic results, but I do think that there was some negative effect. There are many papers and exams that I would have likely had better grades on, had my study or writing timeline not been shortened by the fulfillment of my military obligations.

Certainly, those of us who choose to serve in the military know that we will be taking on an additional workload. However, I think that it would be fair to extend some level of accommodation so that students' grades are not negatively affected by their military obligations. Federal laws protect military reservists and Guardsmen from having their employment outcomes affected by their military obligations. I think that similar accommodations for Oregon higher education, as proposed by SB1557, would be just to those who choose to serve, and allow for fairer outcomes.

Respectfully,

William Iversen  
ASUO Executive  
Chief of Staff