



**House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness Committee  
Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs Testimony  
House Bill 2530 | February 12, 2019**

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### **Summary**

House Bill 2530 establishes a Legislative Task Force on innovative housing strategies. The purpose of this testimony is to brief the House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness Committee on Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs' current initiatives and efforts to address housing and homelessness using innovative strategies, including its efforts in partnership with Oregon Housing and Community Services.

### **Innovations to Address Housing and Homelessness: ODVA Partnership with OHCS**

In the 2017-2019 Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs (ODVA) Legislatively Adopted Budget, a budget note directed \$1.5 million in lottery funds to go to Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS). The budget note directed OHCS to work with ODVA to develop a collaborative plan for expenditure of these funds and to report to the Legislature in the February 2018. (See [2018 ODVA/OHCS Legislative Report](#))

Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs has a strong partnership with Oregon Housing and Community Services on the implementation plan that includes:

- OHCS hired a Veteran Homelessness Integrator Position
- Increased Community Action Agency (CAA) Veteran Services Funding
  - This is the “boots on the ground,” direct services to veterans on a local level
- OHCS and ODVA co-hosted two Homeless Convening conferences, bringing local partners from across the state together for two days to collaborate on ways to address veteran homelessness; a third conference is planned for Summer 2019
- Funds provided Permanent Housing for Homeless Veterans; able to fund an additional OHCS Multifamily Housing NOFA project

- Operation Welcome Home (OWH)
  - OHCS and ODVA are collaborating with 10 communities to house 500 homeless veterans across Oregon.
  - Campaign focuses on building a local veteran leadership team; providing contracted technical assistance to develop and work with a veteran by-name list
  - In support of OWH, a limited-duration committee was established to advise and assist the 10 communities in overcoming barriers to housing homeless veterans. OHCS and ODVA are staffing this committee

### **Innovations to Address Housing and Homelessness: Veteran Service Grant Program**

In the early Spring of 2017, Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) funded a number of grants through the Veteran Services Grant Program that was established under House Bill 2891 (2017). The program awarded \$550,000 to 10 proposals. Many of the proposals focused on housing and homeless with all or a portion of the grant funds. A complete list of the grants is attached as Exhibit A. These grants provide local community organizations with the capacity to bring creativity and innovation to address housing and homelessness, including:

- **Polk County Family and Community Outreach Department** – provides homeless veterans meals, stable transitional housing, laundry and showers, and connections to veteran service organizations.
- **Oregon City Police Department** – first responder for veteran homelessness prevention and assistance. Rental assistance and job training assistance.
- **St. Andrew Legal Clinic** – full legal services to veterans with a focus on issues of economic stability and housing security.
- **Klamath/Lake Community Action Services** – emergency housing for veterans/families awaiting rehousing/permanent housing.
- **Native American Rehabilitation Association of the NW** – Outreach and case management for Native American/Alaska Indian homeless veterans to address health/mental health care and housing.

### **Innovations to Address Housing and Homelessness: ODVA's Efforts for Underserved Veterans**

- Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs' Incarcerated, LGBTQ and Women Veterans Coordinators work directly with at risk veterans, and state, federal and local community partners to help connect veterans to local housing and support services

### **Innovations to Address Housing and Homelessness: ODVA's Future Efforts 2019-21**

- ODVA will target gaps in veterans housing and homeless services in its 2019-21 budget through a grant program for local organizations plus a homeless veteran coordinator position for a total of \$1 million

### Exhibit A: Veteran Services Grants Awarded

Proposer	Location	Purpose	Grant Award
Community Connection of NE Oregon (non-profit organization)	Baker and Union Counties	Veterans Rides to Wellness. Transportation for veterans to local medical appointments.	\$ 50,000
Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde (sovereign tribal community)	Yamhill, Polk and Marion Counties	Outreach to all veterans, including tribal and provide medical, dental and eye care. Partial funding of request.	\$ 8,688
Coos County Area Transit Service District (a component of Coos County)	Coos County - south coast	Establish shuttle service for veterans between Coos County and Roseburg VA hospital. Partial funding of request	\$ 130,840
Klamath/Lake Community Action Services (non-profit organization)	Klamath and Lake Counties	Emergency housing for veterans/families awaiting rehousing/permanent. Plus job training/SOAR program. Transportation.	\$ 35,000
Lane Council of Governments, Seniors and Disability Division (intergovernmental; assn. of local gov.)	Lane County	Case management for veteran's access/use of community services/benefits; develop action plan, assist on applications.	\$ 46,933
Native American Rehabilitation Association of the Northwest (non-profit organization)	Greater Portland	Outreach and case management for Native American/Alaska Indian homeless veterans address health/mental health care, housing.	\$ 74,990
Oregon City Police Department (City government)	Oregon City	First responder for veteran homelessness prevention and assistance. Rental assistance, job training assistance.	\$ 26,664
Polk County. Family and Community Outreach Department. (County government)	Polk County	Provide homeless veterans meals, stable transitional housing, laundry, shower, connection to veteran service organizations	\$ 39,160
Project ABLE (non-profit organization)	Marion, Polk, Yamhill, Linn, Tillamook, Washington and Multnomah Co	Train veterans as veteran-specific Peer Support Specialists to support veterans with behavioral health issues	\$ 87,725
St. Andrew Legal Clinic (non-profit organization)	Yamhill, Columbia, Clackamas, Washington and Multnomah Co	Provide full legal services to veterans with a focus on issues of economic stability and housing security	\$ 50,000
		Total Grant Awards	550,000