

Paul L Evans
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 20



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

March 12, 2019

Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness
Oregon House of Representatives
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Ref: House Bill 2825

Dear Colleagues:

House Bill 2825 (HB 2825) provides a critical “bridge” for veterans pursuing post-secondary educational and/or training completion. It is offered to mitigate an emerging challenge for student veterans across the State of Oregon: situations when a specific course required for a degree is not available (enough) to continue full-time benefit status for veterans utilizing the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Although “gap” coverage was included in the 2007 reforms the US Department of Veterans Affairs have stopped allowing this variation.

The change in credit load requirements combined with the reduced availability of upper division courses because of financial pressures impacting colleges and universities throughout the State of Oregon has created an environment where more and more veterans are finding themselves unable to complete their formal education. This is a problem warranting our attention – requiring immediate action.

HB 2825 provides veterans actively pursuing educational and/or training with a once per every four-year eligibility for use of a “forgivable loan” administered by the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs. Our goal is to bridge the gap that has emerged through no fault of the veteran students following the rules and doing everything they can to finish their studies.

In conversations held with student veterans across the state the need for this kind of help has been identified as a critical tool for success. Accordingly, it is our hope this measure will be passed into law, funding through Ballot Measure 96 funds, and secure a pathway for student veterans to complete their training and begin to build a new life.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. Please let me know what more information may be required to earn your support.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul L. Evans".

Paul L. Evans
Oregon House of Representatives (HD 20)