Oregon
Kate Brown, Governor

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Oregon achieves . . . together!

Colt Gill
Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction

SB 690A: Interstate Military Compact Extension
House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness
April 30, 2019

Good afternoon Chair Evans, and members of the committee. For the record, I am Jessica Ventura for the Oregon Department of Education. I am here to ask for your support of SB 690A, a bill that extends Oregon's participation in the Interstate Compact on Education Opportunity for Military Children and makes a few administrative updates.

It is estimated that the average military family moves three times more often than the average non-military family. These frequent moves can cause children to miss out on extracurricular activities and face challenges in meeting graduation requirements, as each local school district has its own set of rules, policies and procedures for how it treats transferred students. This can result in the loss of academic credit and can make participation in extracurricular transitions more difficult.

The Department of Defense, in collaboration with the National Center for Interstate Compacts and the Council of State Governments developed an interstate compact that addresses the educational transition issues of children of military families. Currently all 50 states and the District of Columbia participate in the interstate compact that provide a uniform policy platform for resolving the challenges experienced by military children.

The Compact ensures that the children of military families are afforded the same opportunities for educational success as other children and are not penalized or delayed in achieving their educational goals by inflexible administrative and bureaucratic practices. States participating in the Compact work to coordinate graduation requirements, transfer of records and course placement and other administrative policies.

In 2014, the Legislature created the necessary structure for Oregon to join the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children through SB 1506. The Council serves approximately 1,703 students:

Issues:

Now that we have been operating the state council for a while, we are requesting some fine-tuning to the law. There are four issues the amended bill resolves:

1. Because there was some uncertainty about whether Oregon had enough military-related issues for a full-blown state commission, a sunset date was put on the council. The department asks that the sunset be removed.
2. The 2014 bill has the governor making appointments to the state council. To better align education policy, the Governor named the existing State Board of Education and the ODE Director to form the commission. The department asks that this be put in statute, as it clarifies who is on the Council and eliminates the need to reappoint new members whenever a SBE member steps down.
3. The 2014 bill directed the military department to staff the commission, but the Department of Education has been staffing it. We would ask that this be recognized in the law.
4. The 2014 measure directed the commission to meet quarterly; we ask that this be changed to annually to better align with other states' practices.

Thank you for considering our bill. I'm happy to answer any questions.