

2 February 2021

TO: Chair Bynam, Co-Chair Noble & Members of the House Committee on Judiciary
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

FROM: Laurie Kimmell, MSgt, USAF (Ret.)
Sisters, OR 97759

SUBJECT: Argument in Favor of HB 2239

ATTENTION: FOR ALL REVIEWING AUTHORITIES

1. Please accept this as my testimony for HB 2239. I have honorably served in the Uniformed Services for 24 years and mentored many Jr. NCO's. I also retired as a Senior Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO). I have also retired from a major metropolitan, Law Enforcement agency. I serve on a county Veterans Advisory Council. I am here on the behalf of incarcerated veterans. I represent an incarcerated veteran that suffers from Military Sexual Trauma (MTS). She tended to human remains and also suffers from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) which was undiagnosed for years. Sgt. Doe fell into self-destructive behavior medicating herself with prescription drugs consequently; she committed an A Misdemeanor. This A – Misdemeanor spiraled into a Measure 11 crime. She needed an available Veterans Treatment Court (VTC).

2. The VA notes that in 2009, 1.16 million of all adults arrested or nearly 10% served in the military. As many as one third of the adult homeless population has served in the military and, at any given time as many as 130,000 are homeless. A 2011 Bureau of Justice statistic report found that the veteran prison population has about 45% suffering from mental illness, with 81% with a substance abuse problem prior to incarceration. Oregon rural counties are struggling with these issues.

3. The following sections need verbiage revisions:

- a. Section 1 (1) reads access to a court program. Instead of court program it should read *to a Veterans Treatment Court.*
- b. Section 1 (a) reads directly providing a Veterans (*add the word treatment*) court with the judicial district or court in another judicial district. *There should be added language that reads within the judicial district or through a Memo of Understanding (MOU) with another judicial district.*
- c. Section 3, the definition of a Service member verbiage should exactly written as in ORS 135.881 (4)

Thank you,


LAURIE KIMMELL, MSgt, USAF (Ret.)