

## **SB 1549 TESTIMONY BY STEPHEN WRIGHT**

Good Afternoon Chair Meek and committee members

I am Stephen Wright. I am a Purple Heart veteran who was shot in Vietnam and spent the next six months in an Army hospital. I currently live in Portland.

I am testifying against SB 1549 that would exempt up to \$17,500 in military retirement annual pay from Oregon's income tax.

My testimony is a very personal story.

Many years ago, I moved my family across the country to Portland so that our three adopted Korean children could best thrive in a more accepting society and culture than what we had experienced before. I also found a better job.

Did we consider taxes in our decision to move to Oregon? No. Should we have? Again no. But rather, my family's happiness and the opportunities Oregon has offered my children is what counted the most.

Rather than supporting this bill, consider doing more to help our veterans living on the streets and/or suffering without mental health support and not those veterans financially secure with retirement benefits who may also be gainfully employed after retiring from the military.

SB 1549 doesn't help anyone based upon disabilities or poverty. It only benefits a small fraction of Oregon vets. Vote no on SB 1549.

Thank you for your consideration.