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Committees

Senate Committee on Natural Resources
Joint Committee Ways & Means Sub
900 Court St NE S-316 on Public Safety



OREGON STATE LEGISLATURE
900 COURT ST NE SALEM, OREGON 97301

February 28th, 2024

Dear Co-Chair Steiner & Co-Chair Sanchez,

I hope this correspondence finds you well. I wanted to reach out to you regarding the third Oregon Veterans' Home to be established in Roseburg. As you are aware, there are currently two Veterans' Homes in Oregon that provide qualifying veterans with long-term care, with one in The Dalles and one in Lebanon, and Oregon law provides for two more. Admittance to a Veterans' Home is a benefit that honorably discharged veterans have earned, that extends to their spouses and to the parents of children who died serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. Established in law during the 2011 Legislative Session, ORS 408.385 states "The Director of Veterans' Affairs shall establish a third Oregon Veterans' Home in Roseburg, in addition to the two facilities authorized by law on July 17, 1995." Also established in the 2011 Legislative Session was \$10.5 million in funding for Oregon's required match of 35%.

Unfortunately, inflationary costs with building and construction have more than tripled and now the states match is \$35 million dollars, with the federal match of \$65 million dollars.

The property for the Oregon Veterans' Home in Roseburg has been secured, on the VA campus and adjacent to the VA Hospital. The infrastructure, such as water, sewer, electrical and storm water has been built out in preparation for the future Oregon Veterans' Home facility. Douglas County and the City of Roseburg are committed to the project and there is a past agreement of deferral for SDC and permit fees.

The Oregon Veterans' Home in Roseburg would build a 154 bed unit facility for one of our most vulnerable populations, our elderly Veterans, when they need care the most. The facility will supply long term care, memory care and housing needs for Veterans as well as short term and rehabilitation care for Veterans, freeing up needed hospital beds. Many of these Veterans will also receive critical behavior health services within the facility as well. Further, this project will free up needed beds in The Dalles and Lebanon Veterans' Homes, allowing for Veterans in those areas the ability to be closer to their families for needed care. The facility will also allow our rural communities needed skilled, family wage jobs to help retain in our communities one of our most critical assets, our youth, from leaving the area for employment.

Fulfilling the State of Oregon's statutory obligation to establish the Roseburg Veterans' Home fulfills the goals of needed housing and behavioral health services. No other project, that I am aware of, will have a

greater return on our investment, where the states investment of \$35 million dollars leverages the federal government investment of \$65 million dollars for these critically important housing and behavioral health services again, for our vulnerable Oregon Veterans. Additionally, the ongoing costs to run and manage the Roseburg Veterans' Home, like those in The Dalles and Lebanon, are also supplied federally.

The Veterans of Oregon, their families and I sincerely appreciate you and ODVA Director Daniels' commitment to establishing the third Oregon Veterans' Home in Roseburg. They have waited long enough, and the inflationary costs of delay in upwards of 8.5% annually for construction will only continue to burden the project financially. This project is incredibly important to Oregonians, as are the housing and behavioral services the facility will provide our honorably discharged veterans, when they need them the most.

Please see the supporting information in the attachment and timeline below. As always, I am available to answer any questions you may have and thank you for your support.

[\(2011\) HB2578](#) Establishes that third Oregon Veterans' Home will be in Roseburg.

[\(2011\) HB5036](#) Funding Bill Section 18. Established state match funding allocation of \$10.5M ODVA.

[\(2013\) SB5533](#) Funding Bill Section 15. Funding carried over.

[\(2015\) HB5030](#) Funding Bill Section 35. Funding carried over.

[\(2019\) SB37](#) Governor Brown legislation on behalf of ODVA that replaced "third" with "Roseburg" in statute along with other bookkeeping for the state locations of Veterans' Homes.

[\(2019\) SB5542](#) Funding Bill Section 7. General Obligation Bonds (6)(g)(C) – page 5 of the document shows the \$10.5M plus treasurer costs total \$10.72M.

<https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/202311/Downloads/CommitteeMeetingDocument/279591>

Respectfully,



David Brock Smith Oregon Senate District 01

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CC:

Governor Tina Kotek

President Wagner

Speaker Rayfield

Co-Chair Steiner

Co-Chair Sanchez

ODVA Director Daniels



Rep. Thuy Tran, HD 45
Co-Chair, Veterans Caucus



Sen. Mark Meek, SD 20
Co-Chair, Veterans Caucus



Sen. James Manning, SD 7
Member, Veterans Caucus



Sen. Aaron Woods, SD 13
Member, Veterans Caucus



Rep. Court Boice, HD 1
Member, Veterans Caucus



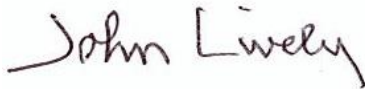
Rep. Charlie Conrad, HD 12
Member, Veteran's Caucus



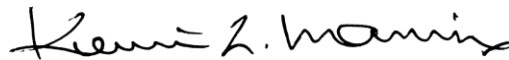
Rep. Paul Evans, HD 20
Member, Veteran's Caucus



Rep. Rick Lewis, HD 18
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Rep. John Lively, HD 7
Member, Veteran's Caucus



Rep. Kevin Mannix, HD 21
Member, Veteran's Caucus