



United Veterans' Groups of Oregon (UVGO)
“In Service to Oregon’s Military Veterans and Their Families”

The Honorable Representative Thuy Tran
The Honorable Representative Rick Lewis
The Honorable Representative Mari Watanabe

2 February 2026

Chairs, House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government and Veterans
900 Court St. NE, Room H-285
Salem, Oregon 97301

Subject: HB4132
Position on Measure: **Support**

Dear Chair Tran and Co-Chairs Lewis and Watanabe,

As the Chair of the United Veterans’ Groups of Oregon (UVGO), I want to thank you and the members of the Committee for your service to the State of Oregon, and for your steadfast dedication to improving the lives of Oregon’s Veterans. The UVGO represents and advocates on behalf of 14 major Veterans groups in Oregon, serving almost 200,000 Veteran residents. I wish to assure you that, when we advocate or communicate with your Committee, the position presented represents the unanimous view of our 14 Veterans’ organizations in Oregon, with thoughtful consideration to the best interests of all Veterans in our great State.

The UVGO strongly supports HB4132 and is proud to have been a member of the interdisciplinary team that refined the current version. The bill is an omnibus of legislative initiatives to strengthen Veterans’ rights and benefits, ensure adequate funding, and add operational resiliency to the core programs of the Oregon Department of Veteran’s Affairs (ODVA). Significantly, in the current uncertain fiscal and federal policy environment, HB4132 lays out short and long-term strategies to address key focus areas that are UVGO priorities for this legislative session. HB4132 will provide ODVA with increased capacity to address Veterans’ homelessness and suicide reduction; advocacy for incarcerated Veterans; and additional education, health, and women Veterans’ coordinators. HB4132 also seeks a pathway to expand the implementation of Veterans’ Treatment Courts, which are proving to be successful and cost-effective, to rural Oregon counties. Another provision will extend the impact of the successful Educational Bridge Grant program.

Under normal circumstances, we might expect smaller bites of individual legislation to address each of these priority areas. However, we are experiencing a perfect storm of fiscal uncertainty, societal change, and accelerating governmental reform that calls for bold action to proactively combat particular harms that Veterans encounter as a result of their service to the Nation. Despite being a state that respects and honors its Veterans, the scourge of suicide and homelessness disproportionately afflicts Oregon Veterans.

HB4132 will provide ODVA with the depth and range to develop and implement new pilot programs and strategies to ensure Oregon Veterans have better access to treatment and resources. The bill will undoubtedly save lives and help Veterans reintegrate and become independent, contributing members of our Oregon communities.

In the current volatile fiscal environment, every bill is critically adjudged by its cost to taxpayers. While the full fiscal impact of HB4132 is yet to be determined, the bill seeks to responsibly manage any additional fiscal burden. It mandates that the Veterans Services Fund (funded by lottery dollars) hold a reserve of no more than 12% (similar to other reserve funds established from lottery proceeds). This reduction from the current mandate of 16% should immediately make available substantial funds to help implement the new programs and employees envisioned in the bill. HB4132 establishes the goal that ODVA receive an appropriation from the General Fund in an amount not less than \$10,000,000 in 2015 dollars, adjusted for inflation. This provision enshrines the will of Oregon voters, who in 2016 flocked to the polls to mandate 1.5% of Lottery proceeds be dedicated to support Veteran services, a cause uniting 84% of voters.

HB4132 swings big for the bleachers but seeks to proactively address the turbulence Veterans may encounter as Federal funding becomes uncertain in our new political landscape. It has strong bipartisan support in the Veterans' Caucus. With a broad appeal to both sides of the aisle, HB4132 is a win-win for all parties involved. Enactment of HB4132 will demonstrate that Oregon values the selfless service of Veterans and wants to provide every opportunity for Veterans to be contributing and productive residents of our State. Thank you for this opportunity to provide the UVGO position on this important legislative issue.

On behalf of the United Veterans' Groups of Oregon and our state's Veterans, the UVGO urges the committee to support HB4132 and the stability it will bring to our State and to our Veterans.

Sincerely,



MARY J. MAYER, Colonel, USAF (Ret)
Chair, United Veterans' Groups of Oregon
cell phone: 310-897-1902
email: MaryJMayer@yahoo.com

The United Veterans' Groups of Oregon Membership Includes: Air & Space Forces Association; American Legion; Association of the United States Army; Disabled American Veterans; Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.; Korean War Veterans' Association; Marine Corps League; Military Officers Association of America; Military Order of the Purple Heart; Non-Commissioned Officers Association; Paralyzed Veterans of America Tri-State Chapter; Veterans of Foreign Wars, Vietnam Veterans of America; and 40+8.