



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

3 February 2026

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

Subject: HB4099
Position on Measure: **Support**

Dear Chair Tran and Co-Chairs Lewis and Watanabe,

Thank you and the members of the Committee for this opportunity to provide the opinion of the United Veterans' Groups of Oregon (UVGO) on this bill. 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 supports the aim of HB4099 to establish an interdisciplinary Task Force on Responding to Veterans in Crisis, with specific tasks to make findings and recommendations to the Legislative Assembly related to emergency management and Veterans no later than September 15, 2026. We believe the Task Force membership as proposed represents the necessary stakeholders which would be beneficial to developing concepts for this innovative approach to identifying and documenting Veterans in crisis.

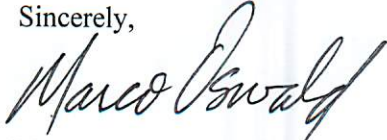
The challenges inherent for the Task Force to identify all of the institutional, legal, and practical issues associated with forming a Veteran crisis response team in each county in Oregon are great. However, the need for such a program is validated by recent findings by the national Council on Criminal Justice Veterans Justice Commission. This high-level and non-partisan group of experts concluded that the U.S. justice system regularly falls short in identifying Veterans in crisis with unique risk factors, and redirecting them away from prison to tailored rehabilitative programs. The Commission produced 11 evidenced-based recommendations to reduce incarceration and improve outcomes for Veterans in the justice system (https://counciloncj.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Vets-Summary_Revised.pdf).

The UVGO urges this Committee to support HB4099. Formation of the Task Force is a powerful symbol that Oregon honors Veterans' sacrifices and is dedicated to identifying best practices and procedures to benefit justice-involved Veterans and our communities.

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 HB4099 and the benefits it will bring to our State and to our Veterans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Marco Oswald".

Marco Oswald, Colonel, US Army (Retired)
Legislative Coordinator
United Veterans' Groups of Oregon (UVGO)

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.