

Submitter: Chris O'Neill

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management and Veterans

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4091

Honorable Chair Thuy Tran and Members of the House Committee on Emergency Management and Veterans.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 4091 that provides guardrails the activation of the Oregon National Guard. I am a veteran who served from 1968 to honorable discharge in 1974, including a tour of duty in Vietnam (Phan Rang, 69-70). I listened to the testimony at the hearing on February 3rd and learned a lot about the complex legal issues involved. I will comment on what I regard as the importance of clarifying, and thereby limiting, the President's almost casual attitude toward the men and women who serve the nation in uniform.

Like many veterans, I watched from afar as the White House once again provoked tension in Portland to make political points rather than protect the citizens from genuine dangers that local law enforcement could manage. Fortunately, Judge Immergut, nominated to the federal bench by President Trump, closed the door on the reckless and wasteful activation of the Oregon National Guard to demonstrate his presidential power as commander and chief.

That series of events convinced me that guardrails for the activation by the Guard need to be set sooner rather than later, even if the courts rule against Oregon in some future dispute. Thus, I support the Oregon Legislature's effort to clarify the relationship between federal and state roles as described in HB 4091.

Thank you.

Chris O'Neill

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