

Mark Meek
State Representative
District 40



House of Representatives

May 9, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Nathanson, Chair
The Honorable Lynn Findley, Vice-Chair
The Honorable Pam Marsh, Vice Chair
House Committee on Revenue
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Support for SB 500 A

Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Findley and Marsh and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 500 A

Every year, thousands of brave Oregonians make great sacrifices for their country by risking everything to fight for the freedoms we enjoy today. Unfortunately, many return home with service-connected disabilities. Reentering into civilian life can be burdensome for many, which is why homelessness among veterans is a prevalent issue where on any given night, there may be over 1,300 homeless veterans in our streets. While resources exist to support veterans, there is more we can do as a state to keep our veterans in their homes.

SB 500, which passed through the Oregon Senate unanimously, is a notable step towards ensuring Oregonians who have risked everything for their country, stay in their hard-earned homes. Oregon would be following in the footsteps of over 15 states which have increased their property tax exemptions for disabled vets to continue with rising real estate prices. Once covering 100 percent of the value of a median single-family home, Oregon's property tax exemption covers less than ten percent.

Oregon should support SB 500 as it is progress towards addressing a root of the problem which over ten percent of Oregon veterans face, homelessness. By supporting SB 500, Oregon will follow suit in keeping our veterans in their homes and ensuring that not one more disabled veteran loses their home due to the sacrifices they've made for their country. Our veterans have stood valiantly with their state, and their country. Colleagues, will you join me in standing with them?

Respectfully,

Mark Meek

State Representative – Oregon House District 40