

Bend Heroes Foundation
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Bend, OR 97701

Feb. 3, 2020

Senator Alan Olsen
Chair, Oregon Senate Veterans Committee
Capitol Building
Salem, OR

Dear Chairman Olsen.

Subject: SB 1542: Relating to a memorial to Oregon's Vietnam War Veterans

As Chairman of the Bend Heroes Foundation, a 2 tour combat wounded Vietnam War veteran and advisor to the Vietnam War Memorial Fund, I urge the Senate Veterans Committee to vote unanimously in favor of SB 1542 now before your distinguished Committee.

Bend Heroes Foundation previously endorsed the Oregon Vietnam Memorial proposed on the Capitol grounds. The late Mr. Robert D. Maxwell, a Director of our Foundation and WWII Medal of Honor recipient also endorsed the proposed Vietnam War memorial.

Mr. Stephen Bates, President, Vietnam War Memorial Fund has already provided your committee with statistics on veterans who served, died, were wounded in Vietnam as well as numbers of Vietnam Era veterans and number of Vietnam veterans who lived and live in Oregon.

Oregon dedicated its large and inspiring state WWII Memorial dedicated on the Capitol grounds on June 6, 2014 – the 70th anniversary of D-Day. As Oregon's Vietnam War casualties are the second highest war casualties – WWII being the most, it would be very appropriate to honor Vietnam War Veterans at the Capitol adjacent to the WWII Memorial. Some of Oregon's Vietnam Veterans also served during WWII.

As we may never have this opportunity again to add veterans' memorials at the Capitol, I requested the Vietnam War Memorial also include memorials for Gold Star Families, Vietnam POWs and MIAs, Combat Wounded (Purple Heart) and Persian Gulf War casualties in the overall magnificent design referred to by President Bates.

Let's honor Oregon's Vietnam Veterans on the Capitol grounds now and not repeat the belated honors to our WWII Veterans. Oregon's Vietnam veterans are in their late 60s with an average age of mid 70s. I am 85 and one of the last combat veterans to serve in Vietnam.

Mr. Bates has my permission to read this testimony to your Committee.

Thank you.



Chairman, Bend Heroes Foundation
LTC US Army, Retired
Master Army Aviator
Vietnam 1966-1967, 1972-1973