


Testimony on SB 790
OREGON VETERANS MEMORIAL HIGHWAY US HWY 30
to
Senate Committee on Veterans and Emergency
Preparedness

by

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Introduction

- Thank you Chair Manning and Committee members for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 790
- Thank you Sen. Knopp for sponsoring SB 790 and many previous veterans' highways legislation
- I am Dick Tobiason, Chairman, Bend Heroes Foundation and requestor of SB 790 and 5 prior bills designating 8 veterans highways across Oregon

HISTORY OF 8 VETERANS WAR HIGHWAYS

LEGISLATION: 2009 – 2019

2009: SB 449: WWII US HWY 97/SR 126

2013: SB 461: VIETNAM I-84

2015: HB 2036: WWI US HWY 395, KOREA & PURPLE
HEART TRAIL I-5, GWOT US HWY 101

2017: HB 2100: OREGON MEDAL OF HONOR US HWY 20

2019: HB 3452: POW/MIA US HWY 26

OREGON VETERANS WAR CASUALTIES

WAR	SERVED	DIED	ESTIMATED WOUNDED	TOTAL CASUALTIES	HIGHWAY
WWI	44,166	1,066	1,800	2,866	US 395
WWII	152,000	3,772	9,900	13,672	US 97/SR126
KOREA	74,000	269	672	941	I-5
VIETNAM	119,784	803	2,000	2,803	I-84
GWOT*	89,812	112	679	790	US 101
TOTAL	479,762	6,022	15,051	21,072	

Oregon's 480,000 Veterans Serving During 5 Major Wars



MAP OREGON WAR VETERANS' HIGHWAYS



WWI Veterans Memorial Highway US Hwy 395



WWII Veterans Historic Highway US Hwy 97



Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway I-5



Vietnam Veterans Memorial Highway I-84



Persian Gulf, Afghan & Iraq Veterans Memorial Hwy US Hwy 101



Purple Heart Trail I-5



Combined Korean War and Purple Heart Trail Sign I-5



Oregon Medal of Honor Highway U.S. Hwy 20



POW/MIA Memorial Highway US Hwy 26



Summary 8 Veterans Highways

- Honor ~ half million Oregon **wartime** veterans
- 90+ signs installed on 7 border to border physical highways (2 vets highways on I-5)
- 5 highways are firsts in our nation
- Total length ~ 3,000 miles within Oregon
- Paid ODOT and others > \$100,000 to fabricate and install signs – no taxpayer \$
- Required 5 bills since 2009
- Other states adopting OR MOH, POW/MIA highways
- **Time to honor Oregon's past/future peacetime and future wartime veterans**

Oregon's 480,000 Veterans Serving During 5 Major Wars



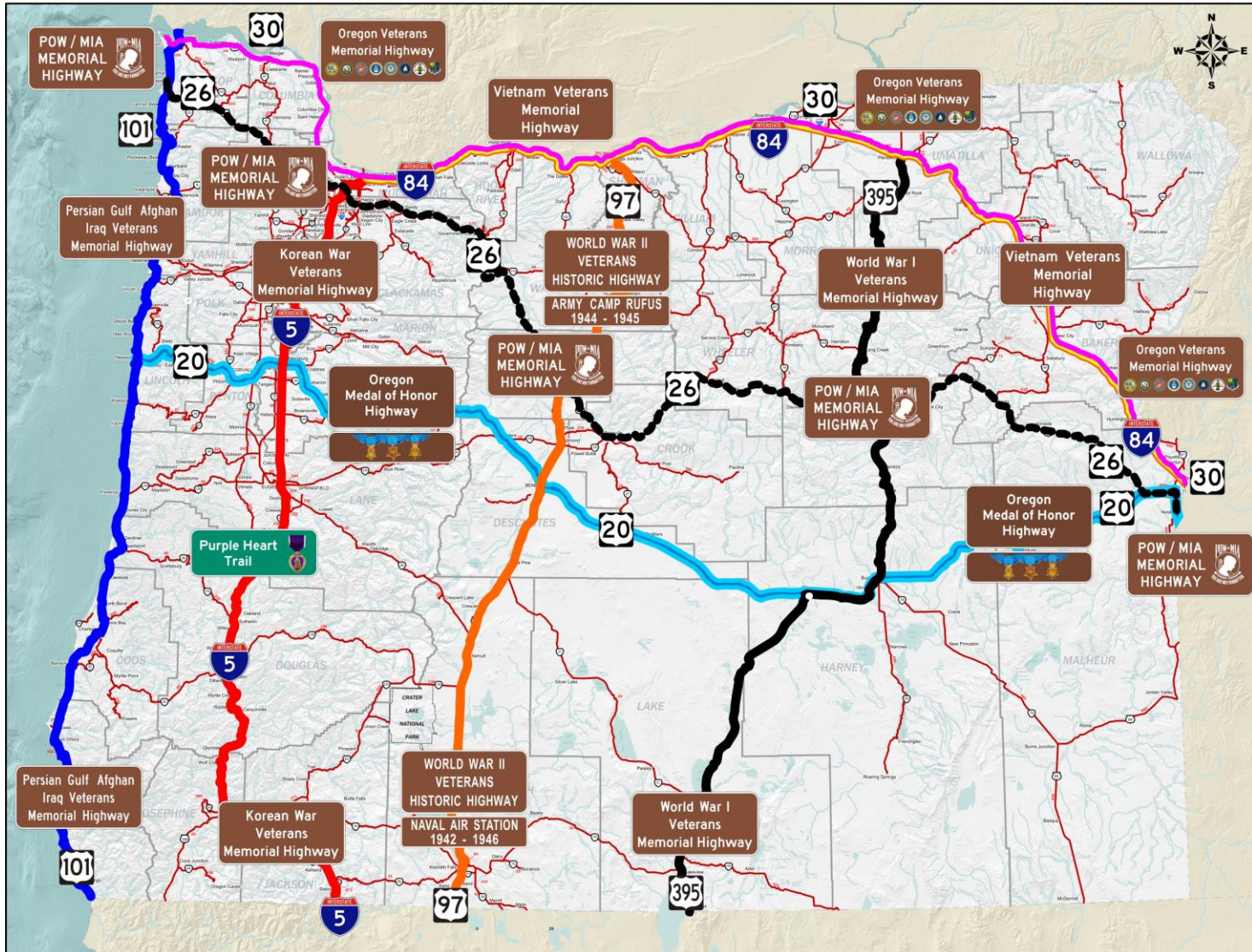
Oregon's Living Wartime & Peacetime Veterans

232,801 War + 70,888 Peace = 303,689 Total
(VA Data 2020)



Map of US Hwy 30: Astoria - Ontario

Oregon Veterans Memorial Highways



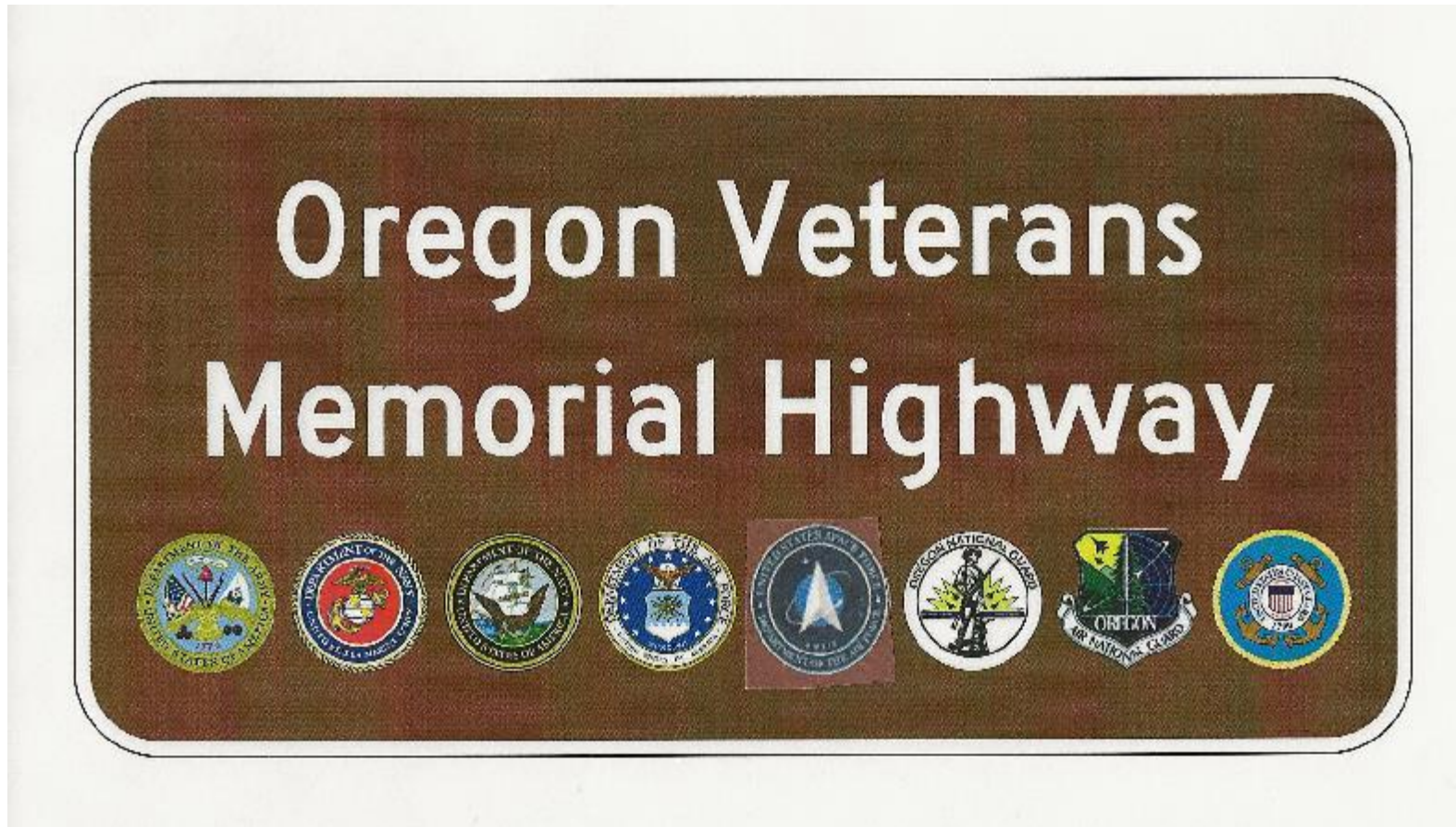
SB 790

- Designate all 477 miles of US Hwy 30 as Oregon Veterans Memorial Highway
- Honor peacetime and future war veterans
- All inclusive
- Longest border to border highway in Oregon
- Not now designated as a veterans' highway
- Peacetime veterans 23% of all living veterans
- US Hwy 30 spans USA and is 3rd longest
- Oregon's segment longest of all 11 states

SB 790 Continued

- US Hwy 30 overlaps WWI and Vietnam vets hwys
- Preserve all existing highway names
- Veterans pay ODOT to fabricate/install signs
- All signs display military service and National Guard seals as agreed to by ODOT, DOD and FHWA
- Adds 477 miles to 8 existing war highways
- Total length 3,434 miles within Oregon
- Equals longest driving distance in USA - Blaine, WA to Miami, FL
- Motivate other states to follow a la Oregon's Medal of Honor and POW/MIA highways

Concept: Oregon Veterans Memorial Highway Sign (4 ft. x 8 ft.)



Closing

Thank you Chair Manning and members for this opportunity to honor Oregon's veterans once more.

I respectfully request this Committee to vote Do Pass for SB 790.

I will try to respond to your questions & comments.