

Submitter: Kenneth Evans

On Behalf Of: The Emerald Empire Chapter, Military Officers Association of America

Committee: Senate Committee on Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal and World Affairs

Measure **SB178**

Chair Manning, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to present our views on this legislation.

My name is Kenneth Evans, and I am a retired officer of the uniform services of the United States, retiring in 2001. I was a Civil Engineer stationed in Oklahoma, Arizona and Alaska.

I belong to the Military Officers Association of America; specifically, the 108 members of the Emerald Empire Chapter in Eugene. Our chapter and the national organization's 355,000 members work to advocate for all veterans, servicemembers, their families and survivors, especially on uniformed services personnel matters and proposed legislation affecting the career force, the retired community, and veterans of all the uniformed services.

I support Senate Bill 178 as a way to retain and to attract retiring uniformed services members to this state so that our communities can benefit from the values, leadership and the continued desire to serve that these individuals bring with them. I belong to an organization of retired, former, and active-duty officers of the uniformed services in Eugene. Among that membership are current and former presidents of such civic and fraternal organizations as Kiwanis, Rotary, MADD, Elks, and the University of Oregon Alumni Association. They are key leaders in churches, philanthropic organizations, commercial development groups and chambers of commerce. They volunteer in the Coast Guard Auxiliary, various fire departments, community development corporations, Scouts, School Garden Project and health and veterans' organizations and other nonprofits operating for the good of youths and seniors in our community. We even have someone who volunteers as a chaplain at the jail.

Oregon communities profit greatly from these uniformed services retirees. Oregon appears to have a declining number of retirees in the state with the trend continuing, it's time we gave them another reason to look at this state, instead of one of the other 37 states that do not tax retiree pay, when they are planning their transition to civilian life. Finding ways to adjust State policy on the treatment of uniformed services members' pensions is a positive way to accomplish this.