

Submitter: Kylee Suter

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB466

Kylee Suter
Regarding SB 466
01/29/24

My name is Kylee Suter, and I am a former camper at Oregon Summer Star for eight years. Then in the 2024 session, I joined the CLAC staff for my first year. I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 466. Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony.

Oregon Summer Star is more than just a summer camp—it is a community that feels like home. While it includes traditional camp activities, its impact runs much deeper. From the moment my stepsister introduced me to OSS at age seven, it became the highlight of my summers. Over the years, I formed lifelong friendships with fellow campers who grew with me into CLAC staff. Whether it is your first year or you've been returning for years, OSS welcomes everyone with open arms.

A key part of this connection comes from the shared experiences of military families. Military children face unique challenges that are often not addressed in their communities. At OSS, everyone is affected in different ways, yet all come together to celebrate loved ones through special traditions like the Wall of Honor and Military Rotation Day.

SB 466 is important to me because it would ensure that children from military-connected families—who may not otherwise be able to afford camp—can access this life-changing experience. It would also help secure the future of OSS, ensuring that more children have the opportunity for personal growth, the community, and valuable skills this camp fosters. Without this funding, accessibility to OSS could decline, limiting opportunities for children of Veterans—an underserved population at higher risk for mental health struggles.

Oregon Summer Star directly supports children of Veterans by providing a peer community that understands their unique experiences and challenges. Connected kids are resilient kids, and SB 466 would provide a vital resource to promote resilience, suicide prevention, and mental well-being—all while giving these children a fun and enriching experience to bring home.

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to support SB 466.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kylee Suter