

Submitter: Ashley Prine
On Behalf Of: Oregon Summer Star
Committee: Senate Committee On Veterans, Emergency
Management, Federal and World Affairs
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB466

I am writing to express my heartfelt support for Oregon Summer Star, a camp that has had a profound impact on my children during a challenging time in our lives. When my husband was deployed for the third time, my kids had the opportunity to attend Oregon Summer Star, and their experience was truly transformative. In a time of emotional strain and uncertainty, the camp provided them with a supportive space to connect with others who understood the unique challenges of growing up in a military family. This connection was invaluable, offering my children a sense of understanding and encouragement that I, as a parent, couldn't fully provide.

From the moment they arrived, my children felt a sense of belonging. The staff went above and beyond to create a nurturing and welcoming environment, ensuring each child felt seen and valued. The camp's empathetic approach helped my children open up in ways they hadn't before, offering emotional healing that carried through the weeks and months that followed.

Oregon Summer Star also helped my children develop a sense of pride in their military connection. The camp celebrated military families and acknowledged the unique challenges military children face. My kids left each year feeling empowered by their connection to their military parent, proud of their identity as military children, and strengthened by their place in a larger, supportive community.

Since their first experience, my children have eagerly returned each year. Every summer has allowed them to form deep, meaningful friendships with others who understand their experiences, and reconnect with the incredible staff who have been a constant source of encouragement. The relationships they've built at camp have been integral to their emotional growth, helping them navigate the challenges of military life with resilience and pride.

Oregon Summer Star is more than just a camp—it's a lasting foundation of support for military families. Through the camp's programs and the bonds they've created, my children have been able to process their emotions, reflect on their growth, and find a community that supports them unconditionally. The impact of this camp will stay with them long after summer ends, helping them embrace their identity with pride and strength.

I wholeheartedly support Oregon Summer Star and the invaluable work they do for military families. The camp has empowered my children to feel less isolated and

more connected, and I'm deeply grateful for the positive impact it continues to have on our family. I can't recommend it highly enough, and I'm confident it will continue to provide transformative experiences for many military families in the future.