

Submitter: Veronica Irvin

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB466

February 1, 2025

RE: Senate Bill 466

Chair Manning and members of the committee,

Our names are Veronica and Dewayne Irvin and our daughters, Gwendolyn and Penelope, have attended Oregon Summer Star for many years. When we first moved to Oregon, Dewayne was on active duty and was deployed in the United States Navy. We learned about the Oregon Summer Star camp as a place for children of active duty, veteran, retired, and guard personnel to connect with other campers and counselors with similar experiences. Knowing other children whose parents serve is crucial in a state where most of their classmates cannot relate to having a parent in the military, much less one deployed overseas. Attending the camp validated our daughters' feelings and fears about having a parent gone for so long.

Our daughters cannot imagine not attending this camp. They have tried other camps, but Oregon Summer Star is important because it is the only camp where they can be themselves. Every time they come back, they talk about it for weeks and share their memories. Oregon Summer Star has made them better people and they cannot imagine it no longer existing. Dewayne is now retired from military service. When our daughters attend camp, they help other children, and they know best how to console and support other children whose parents are or will be deployed.

The funding from SB466 is important because it would provide funding for the only camp in Oregon dedicated to the children of our military and our national guard. In addition, SB466 would allow more opportunities and connections throughout the year for these children outside of the one-week camp. States with larger active-duty personnel receive funds for this type of program.

Our family asks the committee to move the bill to the Senate floor for a vote and help it pass to support Oregon's military and veteran families. Thank you for the opportunity to share our perspective on Oregon Summer Star and SB466.

Veronica and Dewayne Irvin  
Corvallis, Oregon

