



Service Employees
International Union
Local 503

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Date: February 27, 2025

To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On
Transportation and Economic Development

From: Mike Powers, SEIU Local 503

RE: Support for HB 5038

Dear Co-Chair Woods, Co-Chair Gomberg, Members of the Committee:

My name is Mike Powers, and I represent SEIU Local 503. We support the Governor's Recommended Budget (GRB) for the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA), as outlined in HB 5038.

SEIU Local 503 represents more than 72,000 workers from the shores of the Pacific Ocean to the banks of the Snake River. At ODVA, our experienced members help ensure that veterans secure housing, find employment, navigate the complex healthcare system, obtain home loans, and more – all to ensure that veterans have access to the critical services they need, when they need them.

The GRB's proposed \$612.4 million investment will support essential ODVA operations, including the Home Loan Program, Appeals and Special Advocacy, Strategic Partnerships, Oregon Veterans' Homes, and services for aging veterans.

We are particularly pleased to see the Governor's budget increase emergency financial assistance for veterans, especially for those facing housing instability. We also support the inclusion of funding for veteran educational and workforce development programs. Critical to this budget proposal are the resources allocated for veterans transitioning from prison back to their communities. Additionally, we commend the dedicated funding for Veteran Service Officers in tribal communities.

We strongly urge your support for this vital budget proposal.

Thank you for your consideration.