

Submitter: Kelly Smothers

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2050

Statement in Support of HB2050 – Oregon Veteran Property Tax Exemption Expansion

As a 34-year veteran of the Oregon Army National Guard with a deployment to Iraq, I strongly support House Bill 2050 (HB2050). This bill represents a long-overdue step toward providing Oregon's veterans with the financial relief they have earned through their service.

Oregon currently lags behind many other states in offering meaningful tax exemptions for veterans. Across the country, states recognize the sacrifices made by service members by significantly reducing or eliminating property taxes for disabled veterans, retired veterans, and their surviving spouses. States like Texas, Florida, and Illinois provide full property tax exemptions for 100% disabled veterans, while others, including Arizona and Virginia, offer substantial reductions for veterans with lower disability ratings. Even our neighboring state of Washington provides more generous property tax relief based on income and disability status.

By passing HB2050, Oregon has the opportunity to honor its veterans in a tangible way. Financial stability is a key concern for many retired and disabled veterans, especially as they transition to civilian life, manage healthcare costs, and adjust to post-service careers. Expanding property tax exemptions would alleviate financial burdens and allow Oregon's veterans to continue contributing to our communities without undue hardship.

This bill is not just about tax relief—it is about showing appreciation for those who have defended our nation. Oregon has always been a proud supporter of its military service members, and HB2050 provides a way to match that sentiment with real action.

I urge lawmakers to pass HB2050 and ensure that Oregon veterans receive the recognition and support they deserve.

Sincerely,

Kelly Smothers

34-Year Veteran, Oregon Army National Guard