

Dear Chair and Members of the House Committee on Health Care,

My name is Derek Clevenger, and I have had the privilege of serving on the Oregon EMS Division Rules Advisory Committee, working as an EMS educator, and serving our nation as a member of both the Active Army and the Oregon Army National Guard. During my time in the Oregon Army National Guard, one of the positions I held for nearly a decade was as the Course Coordinator for the 249th Regimental Training Institute's 68W (Combat Medic) Sustainment Program. I have worked specifically as an EMS Educator for both the Department of Defense and the US Department of State across multiple training programs in nearly 60 countries. I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 3572, which proposes significant advancements in our Emergency Medical Services (EMS) infrastructure, with particular attention to provisions that benefit veterans.

A notable aspect of HB 3572 is its directive to expedite the processing of licensure applications for veterans, active military service members, members of the National Guard and Reserves separating from active duty, and their spouses. This initiative acknowledges the unique challenges faced by these individuals as they transition to civilian careers. By facilitating a smoother entry into the EMS workforce, the bill not only honors their service but also leverages their valuable skills to enhance our state's emergency response capabilities.

Medical training, specifically EMS based medical training, has been left unrecognized by both State and National actors in the EMS space for far too long. Though the licensure level for a majority of combat medics is not reflective of the skill level or knowledge they possess within the EMS space, and for too long has left transitioning medics in a space where they are disincentivized from pursuing careers in EMS once they separate from the service. This bill provides massive leaps in the direction of recognizing and directly incentivizing separating medics to work in EMS in Oregon. By doing so, it stands to also attract separating Active Duty soldiers to the Oregon National Guard specifically. Both increasing readiness and the ability to accomplish their statewide mission.

The bill mandates the development of a comprehensive 10-year strategic plan for EMS in Oregon. This forward-thinking approach ensures that our EMS infrastructure evolves in alignment with emerging needs and technologies. As an EMS educator, I recognize the importance of strategic planning in maintaining a responsive and effective emergency medical system.

HB 3572 proposes Oregon's participation in the EMS Personnel Licensure Interstate Compact, facilitating the seamless practice of EMS professionals across state lines. This is particularly beneficial for military families and veterans, who often relocate and face

licensure challenges. The compact enhances workforce mobility, ensuring that qualified EMS personnel can serve where they are most needed, thereby improving emergency response times and patient outcomes. This will also help to ensure that National Guard medics are more readily available to assist during emergencies like the COVID 19 pandemic, where they would traditionally be limited in scope under Title 32 Status.

The bill allocates funding to bolster EMS resources in underserved regions of Oregon. This initiative is crucial for rural communities that often struggle with limited access to emergency medical care. By directing resources to these areas, HB 3572 aims to ensure equitable healthcare access for all Oregonians, regardless of their location.

Granting the Governor authority to deploy EMS resources during state emergencies ensures a coordinated and efficient response to crises. This provision enhances our state's preparedness and resilience in the face of unforeseen events.

HB 3572 represents a comprehensive effort to strengthen Oregon's EMS framework, with thoughtful provisions that support veterans and their families. As someone deeply involved in EMS education and veteran affairs, I believe this bill will lead to a more robust, inclusive, and efficient emergency medical system in our state. I respectfully urge the committee to support HB 3572 and recommend its passage.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Derek Clevenger', with a stylized, cursive script.

Derek Clevenger

Master Sergeant (Retired)

Former Mayor, Aumsville Oregon