

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING FUNDING FOR OREGON VETERANS

WHEREAS Oregon is the proud home of more than 320,000 veterans who have served in five major wars across three generations.

WHEREAS The Governor's 2017-19 Recommended Budget proposes cutting general fund support of veterans services by \$10 million.

WHEREAS The 2016 Oregon Legislature unanimously referred Ballot Measure 96 to the voters of Oregon; the voters of Oregon voted to pass Ballot Measure 96 with 84 percent of the vote.

WHEREAS The “Legislative Argument in Support” statement in the *Official 2016 General Election Voters Pamphlet* included language stating: “In addition to current state funding for veterans, Measure 96 will provide critical support for our veterans...”

WHEREAS A reduction in general fund support for Oregon’s veterans would not honor the will of the voters.

WHEREAS Ballot Measure 96 was a mandate for Oregon to increase funding for veterans to better access their earned benefits such as education, housing, and healthcare.

WHEREAS Many of the day to day needs of Oregon’s veterans for housing, healthcare, and mental health continue to go unmet and many of our veterans continue to live in the woods, under bridges and in alley ways.

WHEREAS Only one in three of our veterans access their earned benefits and two-thirds of our veterans need assistance to effectively access their medical, disability, education and other federally funded benefits.

WHEREAS The state’s efforts to help more veterans access their earned disability and low income pension benefits also creates a very significant economic multiplier for the local communities in which they live.

WHEREAS The current annual federal amount of dollars coming to Oregon is \$1.3 billion (up from approximately \$600 million in 2006) for non-healthcare benefits and \$1.1 billion in health care benefits (up from approximately \$500 million in 2006).

WHEREAS The federal funds Oregon is able to access and leverage by maintaining its current level of general funds to support veterans significantly lessens the burden on state and county services.

WHEREAS The leaders of Oregon have an obligation to honor the men and women who have served our nation in uniform and to advocate on behalf of veterans.

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED THAT:

We hereby oppose the Governor's 2017-19 Recommended Budget plan to reduce the State of Oregon's general fund support for veterans by \$10 million.

DATED this 12th day of December, 2016.

Bill Hall
President, Oregon Association of Counties
Commissioner, Lincoln County