

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON**  
**VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

January 18, 2005 Hearing Room C

8:30 A.M. Tapes 3 - 4

(Corrected 07-08-05)

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Rep. Donna Nelson, Chair

Rep. Phil Barnhart, Vice-Chair

Rep. Debi Farr, Vice-Chair

Rep. Brian Boquist

Rep. Scott Bruun

Rep. Dave Hunt

Rep. Betty Komp

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jim Stembridge, Committee Administrator

Erin Seiler, Committee Assistant

**MEASURES/ISSUES HEARD:**

**Veterans' Issues - Informational Meeting**

**These minutes are in compliance with Senate and House Rules. Only text enclosed in quotation marks reports a speaker's exact words. For complete contents, please refer to the tapes.**

<b>TAPE/#</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Comments</b>
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TAPE 3, A

001 Chair Nelson Opens the meeting at 8:32a.m. Opens an informational meeting on Veterans' Issues.

**VETERANS' ISSUES - INFORMATIONAL MEETING**

072 Congresswoman Darlene Hooley District 5. Summarizes objectives and goals of the U.S. House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Speaks about the needs of veterans that are not being met by current veterans' programs and services.

133 Congresswoman Hooley Identifies what veterans' needs that are not being met by veterans' programs and services.

176 Congresswoman Hooley Addresses the need to provide all soldiers and veterans with physical and mental health care insurance coverage.

208 Rep. Hunt Asks what veterans' issues should be considered priority.

224 Congresswoman Hooley Identifies the concerns and issues that the state should focus on.

**TAPE 4, A**

007 Chair Nelson Summarizes the goals of the Committee, noting concern regarding low recruitment numbers.

025 Congresswoman Hooley Identifies reasons why recruitment and retention has been difficult for the military.

161 Rep. Barnhart Comments on the efforts and work of Congressman Peter DeFazio.

173 Chair Nelson Recesses the meeting at 9:13 a.m.

174 Chair Nelson Reconvenes the meeting at 9:21 a.m.

177 Chair Nelson Recognizes Kevin O' Reilly from Oregon Paralyzed Veterans' of America.

201 Jim Willis

Director, Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA). Explains how to mitigate the impact of deployment on the soldiers and their families.

- 269 Willis Explains what needs of soldiers are not currently being met and why the federal government has the best resources for addressing these issues.
- 323 Willis Addresses the need to properly fund healthcare programs for veterans.
- 379 Willis Explains the Veterans' Home Loan Program and why Congress must amend Internal Revenue Service statutes so that ODVA can continue provide loans.

**TAPE 3, B**

- 069 Willis Speaks to the difficulty of finding employment for veterans and soldiers returning for combat.
- 121 Willis Speaks to the lack of funding for educational benefits and why the amount of assistance provided by the state needs to increase.
- 200 Gerard Lorang Regional Director, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Summarizes the general type of services and benefits available to veterans through the federal government.
- Gives an overview of the department's organizational structure, intergovernmental relationships, and funding sources.
- 289 Lorang Addresses the availability of education and healthcare benefits.
- 321 Lorang Addresses the type of assistance that is available to a veteran seeking secondary education and employment.
- 379 Lorang Addresses the compensation benefits available to a veteran.

## **TAPE 4, B**

002	Lorang	Provides an overview of the organizations structure, intergovernmental relationships, and funding sources.
057	Rep. Boquist	Asks how veteran is defined by the Veterans' Administration and what qualifies soldiers as veterans under federal statute.
083	Lorang	Explains how veteran is defined at the federal level.
111	Rep. Boquist	Asks for verification of the definition of active-duty soldier under federal title 10 and federal title 32.
212	Chair Nelson	Closes the informational meeting on Veterans' Issues. Adjourns the meeting at 10:19 a.m.

## **EXHIBIT SUMMARY**

### **A. No exhibits submitted**