

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

**March 1, 2005 Hearing Room C**

**8:30 A.M. Tapes 32 - 33**

**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**

**MEMBER EXCUSED:        Rep. Betty Komp**

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

**Erin Seiler, Committee Assistant**

**MEASURES/ISSUES HEARD:**

**Veterans' Issues – Informational Meeting**

**Introduction of Committee Measures – Work Session**

**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 32, A

001 Chair Nelson Opens the meeting at 8:43 a.m. Opens an informational meeting on Veterans' Issues.

### VETERANS' ISSUES –INFORMATIONAL MEETING

014 William Olson Advocacy Chair, Brain Injury Association of Oregon (BIAO). Submits written testimony on the BIAO **(EXHIBIT A)**. Submits Brain Injury and War in Iraq article packet **(EXHIBIT B)**. Summarizes the mission of BIAO, which is to “improve the quality of life of person with brain injury; and to prevent brain injury” and its advocacy activities.

045 Olson Explains how the current military conflict has resulted in a higher percentage of surviving soldiers with traumatic brain injuries.

084 Olson Discusses the two primary categories of brain injuries, traumatic and acquired brain injury.

122 Olson Speaks to the long-term consequences of brain injuries, emphasizing the importance of providing support and counseling for families of those who have suffered a brain injury.

138 Olson Comments on the financial burden families caring for wounded veterans incur, believing that the financial burden should “rightly be borne” by the federal government, not the state.

151 Olson Reviews national and Oregon data on the incidence and cause of traumatic brain injury. Explaining that of the 3000 brain injury hospitalizations in Oregon, more than 1200 will result in long-term disability **(EXHIBIT A, Page 6)**.

170 Olson Provides further detail on the difference between a traumatic brain injury and an acquired brain injury **(EXHIBIT A, Page 8)**.

221 Olson Summarizes the cognitive, physical, and emotional consequences associated with a brain injury **(EXHIBIT A, Page 9)**.

252 Chair Nelson Asks what led to the formation of BIAO.

256	Olson	Speaks to the foundation of BIAO.
277	Olson	Explains the primary activity of BIAO is to provide information and be a resource for survivors, family members, and service providers.
301	Chair Nelson	Asks if BIAO has a list of medical professionals whom they recommend to provide medical and mental health care.
309	Olson	Discusses the online resources provided by the Oregon Brain Injury Resource Network.
320	Chair Nelson	Asks if BIAO has a veterans' benefit specialist to assist veterans suffering from a traumatic brain injury through the administrative process of attaining healthcare.
347	Olson	Responds that BIAO does not have expertise in the areas of administrative processes or health care/ Veterans' benefits, or mental health parity.
394	Rep. Farr	States that mental health parity would apply more towards combat stress, psychological disorders versus a traumatic brain injury caused by external forces.

**TAPE 33, A**

004	Olson	Verifies that psychological related disorders could be a consequence of a traumatic brain injury. Also, clarifies that many brain injuries do not always yield evidence detectable by a MRI scan.
024	Rep. Barnhart	Asks for a basic definition of cognitive rehabilitation.
029	Olson	Explains that cognitive rehabilitation involves reprogramming how the brain works, not repairing it.
051	Rep. Barnhart	Asks if there is additional information as to combat equipment, particularly Modular Integrated Communications Helmet, and its ability to prevent brain injuries in soldiers during combat ( <b>EXHIBIT B, Page 2</b> ).
081	Olson	Answers that no, he does not have any additional information about how the equipment might prevent brain injury.

100	Chair Nelson	Comments on Walter Reed Army Medical Center seeking out brain injury casualties in an effort to understand how the symptoms of brain injuries manifest themselves differently based on the various concussive impacts that can cause such an injury <b>(EXHIBIT B, Page 4)</b> .
112	Rep. Boquist	Affirms that there are almost an equal amount of soldiers seriously injured in non-combat situations as injured in combat situations. Asks for the count of total combat and non-combat casualties and the total non-combat casualties <b>(EXHIBIT B, Page 2)</b> .
149	Olson	Cites data on the number of military casualty evacuations as of January 31, 2005.

**The following informational material is submitted for the record without public testimony:**

	Olson	Submits informational material on traumatic brain injuries in the military <b>(EXHIBIT C)</b> .
243	Chair Nelson	Closes the informational meeting on Veterans' Issues. Opens a work session for the introduction of committee measures.

**INTRODUCTION OF COMMITTEE MEASURES - WORK SESSION**

248	Jim Stembridge	Committee Administrator. Summarizes the list of legislative drafts for introduction as committee measures.
368	Rep. Boquist	Asks if legislative drafts could be divided in related categories based on "relating to clause", Ways and Means referrals, etc.
368	Rep. Barnhart	<p><b>MOTION: Moves that the following list of LC drafts: BE INTRODUCED as committee bills.</b></p> <p><b>LC 3019 (EXHIBIT D)</b></p> <p><b>LC 3020 (EXHIBIT E)</b></p> <p><b>LC 3034 (EXHIBIT F)</b></p> <p><b>LC 3043 (EXHIBIT G)</b></p> <p><b>LC 3044 (EXHIBIT H)</b></p>

**LC 3190 (EXHIBIT I)**

**LC 3192 (EXHIBIT J)**

**LC 3193 (EXHIBIT K)**

**LC 3196 (EXHIBIT L)**

**LC 3222 (EXHIBIT M)**

**LC 3231 (EXHIBIT N)**

**LC 3395 (EXHIBIT O)**

**LC 3398 (EXHIBIT P)**

**LC 3402 (EXHIBIT Q)**

**LC 3403 (EXHIBIT R)**

**LC 3405 (EXHIBIT S)**

**LC 3420 (EXHIBIT T)**

**LC 3422 (EXHIBIT U)**

**LC 3423 (EXHIBIT V)**

**LC 3428 (EXHIBIT W)**

**LC 3436 (EXHIBIT X)**

**VOTE: 6-0-1**

**EXCUSED: 1 – Komp**

**Chair Nelson**

**Hearing no objection, declares the motion CARRIED.**

**TAPE 32, B**

016

Chair Nelson

Closes the work session on introduction of committee measures.  
Adjourns the meeting at 9:37 a.m.

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## **EXHIBIT SUMMARY**

1. A. Veterans' Issues, written testimony, Bill Olson, 9 pp
2. B. Veterans' Issues, Brain Injury and War in Iraq News Articles, Bill Olson, 56 pp
3. D. Introductions, LC 3019, staff, 1 p
4. E. Introductions, LC 3020, staff 1 p
5. F. Introductions, LC 3034, staff 3 pp
6. G. Introductions, LC 3043, staff, 2 pp
7. H. Introductions, LC 3044, staff, 2 pp
8. I. Introductions, LC 3190, staff, 2 pp
9. J. Introductions, LC 3192, staff, 1 p
10. K. Introductions, LC 3193, staff, 1 p
11. L. Introductions, LC 3196, staff, 1 p
12. M. Introductions, LC 3222, staff, 2 pp
13. N. Introductions, LC 3231, staff, 1 p
14. O. Introductions, LC 3395, staff, 6 pp
15. P. Introductions, LC 3398, staff, 8 pp
16. Q. Introductions, LC 3402, staff, 2 pp
17. R. Introductions, LC 3403, staff, 2 pp
18. S. Introductions, LC 3405, staff, 25 pp
19. T. Introductions, LC 3420, staff, 1 p
20. U. Introductions, LC 3422, staff, 3 pp
21. V. Introductions, LC 3423, staff, 2 pp
22. W. Introductions, LC 3428, staff, 8 pp
23. X. Introductions, LC 3436, staff, 2 pp

**The following material is submitted for the record without public testimony:**

1. C. Veterans' Issues, Traumatic Brain Injury Reports, Bill Olson, 6 pp