

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

**April 5, 2005 Hearing Room C**

**8:30 A.M. Tapes 55 - 57**

**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:**

**HB 2932 – Public Hearing**

**HB 2852 – Public Hearing**

**HB 2861 – Public Hearing**

**HB 2914 – Public Hearing**

**HB 3326 – Public Hearing**

**HB 2677 – Public Hearing**

**HB 2425 – Public Hearing**

**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 55, A**

001	Vice-Chair Farr	Opens the meeting at 8:38 a.m. Opens a public hearing on HB 2932.
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**HB 2932 – PUBLIC HEARING**

010	Jim Stembridge	Committee Administrator. Explains HB 2932, which requires local governments that provide transportation services to public to provide free passes to veterans.
015	Roger Martin	Executive Director, Oregon Transits Association. Testifies in opposition to HB 2932.
044	Rep. Barnhart	Questions the necessity of the bill if transit authorities are already considering the feasibility of a bus pass program for disabled and unemployed veterans.
063	Rep. Boquist	Comments on the willingness of Oregon Transits Association, Oregon Employment Department, and Tri Met to “do the honorable thing and what’s right” for a group of citizens who need assistance.
076	Kevin O’Reilly	Government Relations/Advocacy Director, Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America. Testifies in opposition to HB 2932. Submits written testimony on behalf of Jerry Ryan in opposition to HB 2932 <b>(EXHIBIT A)</b> .
105	Mac MacDonald	Representative, Veterans’ Organizations. Testifies in opposition to HB 2932.
121	Vice-Chair Farr	Closes the public hearing on HB 2932. Opens a public hearing on HB 2852.

**HB 2852 – PUBLIC HEARING**

125	Jim Stembridge	Committee Administrator. Explains HB 2852, which creates Veterans' Family Caregiver Program to provide income to family members who provide in-home care to disabled veteran.
133	Jim Willis	Director, Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA). Explains that the services provided by HB 2852 are already available through the Department of Human Services (DHS) and why DHS should continue to be responsible for providing these services.
152	Rep. Bruun	Verifies that DHS is responsible for oversight of in-home care services and asks if DHS specifically provides in-home care for disabled veterans.
164	Willis	States that there is not an in-home care program specifically for disabled veterans, but there is an in-home care program for all disabled citizens.
173	Kevin O'Reilly	Government Relations/Advocacy Director, Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America. Testifies in support of HB 2852 and identifies pending federal legislation that would provide money for respite program for unpaid caregivers. Submits written testimony on behalf of Jerry Ryan in support of HB 2852 ( <b>EXHIBIT B</b> ).
205	Rep. Boquist	Asks that if the federal legislation passes, would DHS automatically implement the program or should the bill be amended to include implementation language.
212	O'Reilly	States that if federal legislation passes it would be automatically implemented by DHS.
214	Rep. Boquist	Inquires as to knowledge of in-home care programs and whether County Veterans Service Officers are the best avenue for attaining the aforementioned services for veterans.
230	O'Reilly	Speaks to knowledge of existing in-home care programs administered by DHS and Oregon Project Independence.
239	Jacqueline Zimmer	Director, Oregon Association of Area Agencies on Aging and Disabilities (O4AD). Explains that the program recommended in HB 2852 already exists in the DHS budget under the title Relative Foster Care Program.
315	Vice-Chair Farr	

Asks if there is a time limit on how long an individual can participate in the Relative Foster Care Program.

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| 326 | Zimmer          | Explains that the Relative Foster Care Program is utilized primarily for long-term assistance, but short-term assistance could be possible if this was the only option. |
| 342 | Rep. Barnhart   | Asks if there is a waiting list for participation in the Relative Foster Care Program or if DHS is able to accommodate all applicants who qualify.                      |
| 352 | Zimmer          | States belief that the program is close to capacity and explains various options available to a family member willing to provide in-home care to a disabled relative.   |
| 380 | Vice-Chair Farr | Closes the public hearing on HB 2852. Opens a public hearing on HB 2861.  |

#### **HB 2861 – PUBLIC HEARING**

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| 395 | Jim Stembridge | Committee Administrator. Explains HB 2861, which requires Director of Veterans' Affairs to establish program to provide grants to veterans for temporary housing. |
| 400 | Jim Willis     | Director, Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA). Speaks to why language relating to County Veterans' Service Officers needs to be changed.                |

#### **TAPE 56, A**

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| 013 | Rep. Boquist | Asks if there are existing housing services that County Veterans' Service Officers and National Veterans' Service Officers could help veterans access. |
| 019 | Willis       | Explains how the State of Oregon is in the process of establishing a Veterans' Emergency Fund to provide veterans' financial assistance.               |
| 029 | Rep. Boquist | Asks what the scope of assistance will be for the Veterans' Emergency Fund.  |
| 033 | Willis       |  |

States that the Veterans' Emergency Fund has the potential to be very broad in the type of assistance provided to a veteran.

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| 040 | Rep. Nelson     | Affirms that ODVA would be willing to work with County Veterans' Service Officers and National Veterans' Service Officers in a collaborative effort to assist veterans. |
| 069 | Rep. Nelson     | Asks to be provided with the data on the number of homeless veterans in Oregon.   |
| 076 | Vice-Chair Farr | Closes the public hearing on HB 2861. Opens a public hearing on HB 2914.  |

#### **HB 2914 – PUBLIC HEARING**

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| 085 | Jim Stembridge | Committee Administrator. Explains HB 2914, which expands elderly rental assistance program to include members of Oregon National Guard, military reserve force or organized militia of other states or territories of United States and their spouses, and veterans. |
| 095 | Rep. Debi Farr | House District 14. Testifies in support of HB 2914.  |
| 125 | Rep. Dave Hunt | House District 40. Submits and summarizes written testimony in support of HB 2914 ( <b>EXHIBIT C</b> ).  |
| 202 | Chair Nelson   | Asks if for information about the number of students who qualify for free or reduced lunches in Oregon.  |
| 216 | Rep. Hunt      | Expresses surprise at the prevalence of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch, particularly in "suburban areas."  |
| 239 | Rep. Bruun     | Asks why a tax credit is not given.  |
| 244 | Rep. Farr      | Explains the conception and purpose of HB 2914.  |
| 252 | Rep. Hunt      | States that HB 2914 was inspired by a similar and successful elder assistance program.   |
| 257 | Chair Nelson   | Asks if there is data available that categorizes veterans by age and location.   |

289	Rep. Hunt	Speaks to the need to concentrate efforts in areas where veterans can be provided with the most assistance because of limited available funds.
313	Rep. Boquist	Asks if the sponsors of HB 2914 would be amenable to an amendment that would make soldiers enlisted under Federal Title 10 and 32 eligible to participate in rental assistance program.
357	Rep. Farr	Confirms willingness to draft an amendment.
368	Patti Whitney-Wise	Executive Director, Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force. Submits and summaries written testimony in support of HB 2914 <b>(EXHIBIT D)</b> .

#### **TAPE 55, B**

009	Rep. Boquist	Confirms the need to have program structured on a “need basis” so that more affluent officers are not receiving an inequitable amount of assistance.
030	Whitney-Wise	Explains how the low-income housing rent subsidy is funded through the Federal Housing Program and why the program must be protected from further funding cuts.
058	Colonel Mike Caldwell	Deputy Director, Oregon Military Department (OMD). Explains why the OMD does not officially support HB 2914.
074	Caldwell	Confirms and explains why the language of HB 2914 should be amended to include Federal Title 10 and 32 status soldiers.
139	Rep. Boquist	Asks what would be the appropriate language to ensure that lower grade soldiers are eligible to participate in rental assistance program.
148	Caldwell	Explains how to determine what language should be used to amend the bill.
205	Caldwell	Speaks to efforts to educate employers and business leaders about hiring veterans and the legality of asking about National Guard and Reservist status.
221	Rep. Boquist	Verifies that under basic housing rules, a soldier must spend housing allowance on housing otherwise it would be withdrawn.

237	Rep. Hunt	Asks if housing allowance is adjusted for familial size or if it is strictly based on pay grade.
246	Caldwell	Explains that housing allowance and basic allowance for subsistence are adjusted based on marital status.
253	Rep. Farr	Verifies that it would appropriate to add an amendment to HB 2914 providing a supplemental housing allowance for soldiers receiving poverty level salaries.
307	Jacqueline Zimmer	Director, Oregon Association of Area Agencies on Aging and Disabilities (O4AD).
363	Dustin Withee	Intern, O4AD. Submits and summarizes written testimony in support of HB 2914 ( <b>EXHIBIT E</b> ).

#### **TAPE 56, B**

034	Zimmer	Speaks in support of amendments that would include people with physical disabilities as eligible participants in rental assistance program purposed in the bill.
106	Rep. Boquist	Verifies the need to continuously monitor and adjust income-eligibility level to allow more people to participate in program.
118	Phillip Kennedy-Wong	Director of Public Policy, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. Testifies in support of HB 2914.
191	Kennedy-Wong	Addresses need to assist deployed Oregon National Guard and Reservists who are defaulting on their home loans.
245	Chair Nelson	Closes the public hearing on HB 2914. Opens a public hearing on HB 3326.

#### **HB 3326 – PUBLIC HEARING**

265	Jim Stembridge	Committee Administrator. Explains HB 3326, which requires waiver of local government business license fees for veterans.
275	Kevin O'Reilly	

Government Relations/Advocacy Director, Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America. Testifies in opposition to HB 3326. Submits written testimony on behalf of Jerry Ryan in opposition to HB 3326 **(EXHIBIT F)**.

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| 352 | Rep. Farr     | Questions whether the original intent was to provide just a one time new business license. |
| 372 | Mac MacDonald | Representative, Veterans' Organizations. Testifies to conditional support of HB 3326.      |

**TAPE 57, A**

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| 005 | Michelle Deister | Senior Staff Associate, League of Oregon Cities. Testifies in opposition to HB 3326.              |
| 009 | Bill Penhollow   | Assistant Executive Director, Association of Oregon Counties. Testifies in opposition to HB 3326. |
| 026 | Chair Nelson     | Closes the public hearing on HB 3326. Opens a public hearing on HB 2677.                          |

**HB 2677 – PUBLIC HEARING**

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| 039 | Jim Stembridge        | Committee Administrator. Explains HB 2677, which creates Oregon National Guard Life Insurance Reimbursement Program and Oregon National Guard Life Insurance Reimbursement Program Fund. |
| 047 | Colonel Mike Caldwell | Deputy Director, Oregon Military Department (OMD). States that OMD does not officially support HB 2677, but suggests that it be made retroactive.  |
| 068 | Chair Nelson          | Asks about status of reenlistments for the Oregon National Guard.  |
| 070 | Caldwell              | Speaks to the recent increase in reenlistment numbers for the Oregon National Guard.   |
| 088 | Mac MacDonald         | Representative, Veterans' Organizations. Testifies in support of HB 2677.  |



121	Chair Nelson	Closes the public hearing on HB 2677. Opens a public hearing on HB 2425.
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### **HB 2425 – PUBLIC HEARING**

134	Jim Stembridge	Committee Administrator. Explains HB 2425, which directs State Parks and Recreation Commission to allow free use of state parks, campsites, and day use areas on any day by disabled veterans and active duty military personnel.
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170	Rep. Gene Whisnant	House District 53. Submits and summarizes written testimony in support of HB 2425 <b>(EXHIBIT G)</b> .
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200	Rep. Farr	Questions if the original intent was to limit cost coverage to a campsite and day use fee.
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217	Kevin O'Reilly	Government Relations/Advocacy Director, Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America. Testifies in opposition to HB 2425. Submits written testimony on behalf of Jerry Ryan in opposition to HB 2425 <b>(EXHIBIT H)</b> .
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245	Tim Wood	Director, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. Submits and summarizes written testimony on HB 2425 <b>(EXHIBIT I)</b> .
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305	Mac MacDonald	Representative, Veterans' Organizations. Testifies in support of HB 2425.
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365	Chair Nelson	Closes the public hearing on HB 2425. Adjourns the meeting at 10:53 a.m.
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### **EXHIBIT SUMMARY**

- A. HB 2932, written testimony of Jerry Ryan, Kevin O'Reilly, 1 p
- B. HB 2852, written testimony of Jerry Ryan, Kevin O'Reilly, 2 pp
- C. HB 2914, written testimony, Dave Hunt, 2 pp
- D. HB 2914, written testimony, Patti Whitney-Wise, 1 p
- E. HB 2914, written testimony, Dustin Withee, 2 pp
- F. HB 3326, written testimony of Jerry Ryan, Kevin O'Reilly, 1 p
- G. HB 2425, written testimony, Gene Whisnant, 1 p
- H. HB 2425, written testimony of Jerry Ryan, Kevin O'Reilly, 3 pp

**I. HB 2425, written testimony, Tim Wood, 1 p**