



From the Office of Representative Paul Evans

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Oregon House Advances Comprehensive Veterans Reform Package

SALEM, OR – Today, the Oregon House of Representatives took a significant step forward in supporting veterans' mental health with the passage of [HB 4132B](#), comprehensive legislation designed to strengthen suicide prevention efforts and expand support services for Oregon's veterans.

Oregon continues to face one of the highest veteran suicide rates in the nation. On average, a veteran in Oregon dies by suicide every three days—an urgent and sobering reminder of the work still ahead.

"I am grateful the 83rd Legislative Assembly has made veterans' care a priority. We must always put the men and women we send into harm's way above party, politics, and positioning. We can never do enough, but this is a fantastic step forward." said **Rep. Paul Evans (D-Monmouth)**. "Suicide prevention isn't just a talking point; it is a moral responsibility. All of us must take swift action to do everything we can, while we can, to end this scourge, killing more veterans than our recent wars have. This legislation reflects a clear message: Oregon will not stand by while our veterans struggle in silence. We owe them action, not just words."

HB 4132B:

- Establishes a **Suicide Prevention Program** within the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs to coordinate and expand targeted prevention efforts.
- Enhances the **Veterans Service Officer Program**, improvements to the distribution methods and tools for ODVA to enhance services to Veterans.
- Modernizes the **Bridge Grant Program**, increasing the amount available to Veterans.

- Directs the Oregon Judicial Department to study pathways for expanding Veterans Treatment Courts to all judicial districts across Oregon, helping ensure that veterans in the justice system receive treatment and support tailored to their service-related needs.

“Over the past year, we’ve seen federal decisions widen the gap in critical services for those who have sacrificed the most for our communities,” said **House Majority Leader Bowman (D - Tigard, Metzger, S Beaverton)**. “This is Oregon’s moment to step forward to close that gap, to uphold our responsibility, and to ensure that every veteran can access the benefits they’ve earned.”

“Supporting our veterans is not a partisan issue; it’s why we are here—to come together and do the important work. This is how we keep faith with the men and women who have given so much in service to our country.” **Rep. Jeff Helfrich (R-Hood River)**.

“Veterans and active-duty service members put their lives on the line every day to fight so that we can enjoy our civil liberties and democracy at home,” said **Rep. Hai Pham (D-South Hillsboro, West Beaverton)**. “Now it’s our turn to honor their service with sustained and thoughtful investments in key programs like suicide prevention and mental health programs.”

HB 4132B passed the House today and now heads to the Senate for final consideration.

“This legislation reflects a clear message: Oregon will not stand by while our veterans struggle in silence. We owe them action, not just words,” said **Rep. Paul Evans**.

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