

**2019 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION**

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**VETERANS**

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# VETERANS MEASURES

<b>Access to Recreation</b>	Enacted Not Enacted	SB 593 -none-
<b>Commemorations and Memorials</b>	Enacted Not Enacted	SCR 12, SCR 20 HB 2195
<b>Education / Workforce</b>	Enacted Not Enacted	SB 35, SB 234, SB 688, SB 689, SB 690, HB 2201, HB 2202, HB 2211, HB 2892, HB 3030 HB 2204-A
<b>General Veterans Policy</b>	Enacted Not Enacted	SB 35, SB 252, SCR 12, HB 2892 HB 2203-A
<b>Grant and Loan Programs</b>	Enacted Not Enacted	SB 35, SB 36, HB 2201, HB 2211 HB 2200-A, HB 2203-A, HB 2204-A
<b>Health Care</b>	Enacted Not Enacted	SB 37 SB 938
<b>Housing</b>	Enacted Not Enacted	SB 36, HB 2530 -none-

Picture: Veterans Walk of Honor memorial, Josephine County – [Gary Halvorson, Oregon State Archives](#)

# TASK FORCES AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The following bills created task forces and reporting requirements. Additional information is provided in the bill summaries.

<b>Bill Number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
SB 688	Directs licensing agencies to report annually to interim committee on veterans on the number of temporary licenses granted and not granted.	Annually by December 31
HB 2201	Directs the Department of Veterans' Affairs to submit report on Veteran Education Bridge Grant program status.	September 15, 2020
HB 2530	Directs Department of Veterans' Affairs and Department of Housing and Community Services to submit a joint report on housing programs for veterans.	Annually by December 1, as specified

[Senate Bill 35](#)

Effective Date: January 1, 2020

**Conservatorship and On-Campus Resources for Veterans**

**At the request of:** Governor Kate Brown for Department of Veterans' Affairs

**Committees:** Senate Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, Senate Judiciary, Joint Ways and Means, House Rules

**Background and Current Law:** The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) administers a grant program to expand and enhance on-campus support for veteran students at post-secondary institutions. Institutions that receive grants may use up to \$25,000 of the amount received to pay salaries for campus veteran resource coordinators, if they commit to matching at least half of the amount used for that purpose. ODVA also operates a conservatorship program that provides court-appointed estate management on behalf of over 140 veterans.

**Bill Summary:** Senate Bill 35 increases the amount of grant dollars that may be put toward campus veteran service coordinators' salaries to \$35,000, lifts the sunset on the program, and makes technical adjustments to the conservatorship program.

**Oregon Laws 2019:** Chapter 539

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[Senate Bill 36](#)

Effective Date: January 1, 2020

**Updating Provisions of Veteran Home Loan Program**

**At the request of:** Governor Kate Brown for Department of Veterans' Affairs

**Committees:** Senate Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

**Background and Current Law:** Oregon is one of only five states that offers a veteran home loan program, separate from the federal Veterans Administration Home Loan Guaranty. Administered through the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA), approximately \$8 billion in low-interest home loans has been made available to more than 334,000 veteran borrowers since 1945. During 2018, ODVA conducted a comprehensive review of statutes governing home and farm loans to veterans, resulting in Senate Bill 36.

**Bill Summary:** Senate Bill 36 refines ODVA's authority to administer home loans to veterans to modernize language usage and make provisions consistent with current practice. It modifies the purpose of such loans - to acquire homes and farms - by removing references to "improvements," updates the definition of "home" to include manufactured dwellings and condominiums, removes references to mobile homes and houseboats, and conforms to federal bond and lending requirements.

**Oregon Laws 2019:** Chapter 223

[Senate Bill 37](#)

Effective Date: January 1, 2020

**Uniform Admission to Veterans' Homes**

**At the request of:** Governor Kate Brown for Department of Veterans' Affairs

**Committees:** Senate Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

**Background and Current Law:** There are currently two Veterans' Homes in Oregon to provide qualifying veterans with long-term care, one in The Dalles and one in Lebanon, and Oregon law provides for two more. Admittance to a Veterans' Home is a benefit that honorably discharged veterans have earned, that extends to their spouses and to the parents of children who died serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) conducted a comprehensive review of statutes governing Veterans' Homes, resulting in Senate Bill 37.

**Bill Summary:** Senate Bill 37 clarifies statutes governing Veterans' Homes to distinguish between each home, provide for consistent application of provisions, and make admissions practices uniform.

**Oregon Laws 2019:** Chapter 224

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[Senate Bill 234](#)

Effective Date: January 1, 2020

**Tuition Parity for Veterans**

**At the request of:** Senate Interim Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

**Committees:** Senate Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

**Background and Current Law:** Several higher education benefits are available to qualifying active duty service members, veterans, and their dependents in Oregon, beginning with in-state tuition at public universities and community colleges for eligible veterans at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. The federal government provides tuition assistance through both the G.I. Bill and vocational rehabilitation benefits; however, a conflicting provision exists in current state law that specifically requires recipients of vocational rehabilitation benefits to pay nonresident tuition. This provision causes some institutions of higher education to differentiate between students based on the source of the assistance they receive: those that receive tuition assistance via the G.I. Bill pay in-state rates, and those who receive tuition assistance through vocational rehabilitation benefits pay nonresident rates.

**Bill Summary:** Senate Bill 234 allows nonresident recipients of federal vocational rehabilitation benefits to pay in-state tuition, the same as nonresident recipients of the G.I. Bill, beginning with 2020-2021 academic year.

**Oregon Laws 2019:** Chapter 283

[Senate Bill 252](#)

Effective Date: January 1, 2020

**Reducing Costs at the Military Department**

**At the request of:** Governor Kate Brown for Oregon Military Department

**Committees:** Senate Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

**Background and Current Law:** The Oregon Military Department (OMD) often expends state funds and then seeks reimbursement from federal funds. When there are delays in reimbursement, OMD may rely on lines of credit. Using lines of credit to account for delays between spending state funds and receiving federal reimbursement can significantly increase OMD's costs, particularly when large-scale construction projects are involved.

**Bill Summary:** Senate Bill 252 streamlines OMD's accounting to enable more efficient receipt and expenditure of funds, and to avoid interest charges associated with using lines of credit. It authorizes OMD to enter into cooperative agreements with the National Guard Bureau and to choose an advance payment method for expenditures of federal funds (rather than a reimbursement method after using state funds). The measures also requires sufficient unencumbered funds in the State Treasury to cover expenditures before OMD may incur a funding obligation that is reimbursable from federal moneys pursuant to a cooperative agreement.

**Oregon Laws 2019:** Chapter 367

[Senate Bill 688](#)

Effective Date: January 1, 2020

**Reporting on Military Spouses' Access to Employment**

**Committees:** Senate Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, Conference Committee

**Background and Current Law:** In 2012, the legislature passed House Bill 4063, to require certain professional licensing entities to accept an applicant's substantially similar military training or experience in lieu of the education or experience required to be licensed. This measure was followed by House Bill 2037 in 2013, to similarly expedite the issuance of professional licensing or certification for service members' spouses and domestic partners. Then in 2014, House Bill 4057 was enacted to compel regulatory and licensing bodies, impacted by the previous two measures, to report information back to the legislature, one time only, by October 1, 2014.

During the current legislative session, House Bill 3030 was enacted, requiring licensing entities to issue credentials to spouses of military personnel stationed in Oregon, if they are currently licensed in good standing in another state and demonstrate competency. Such credentials expire after two years, or when the person's spouse is no longer stationed in Oregon, or when the person's out-of-state license expires, and may not be renewed. Senate Bill 688 is a companion to House Bill 3030, requiring licensing entities to report corresponding information to the legislature on an annual basis.

**Bill Summary:** Senate Bill 688-A directs licensing boards to report to the legislature annually regarding the number of temporary credentials issued to spouses and domestic partners of active-duty personnel stationed in Oregon, as well as the number of denied applications, reasons for denial, and other related information. The measure also specifies that licensing boards must issue temporary credentials to spouses of active-duty personnel.

**Oregon Laws 2019:** Chapter 626

## **Maintaining Resident Status of Service Members' Dependents for Purposes of Post-Secondary Enrollment**

**Committees:** Senate Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, House Education

**Background and Current Law:** A number of higher education benefits are available to qualifying active-duty service members, veterans, and their dependents in Oregon. The federal government provides tuition assistance through the G.I. Bill and vocational rehabilitation benefits. Educational assistance is also available for Oregon residents who served in the National Guard or Reserves in an active-duty capacity in a combat zone since September 11, 2001, through the Voyager Tuition Assistance Program. Priority enrollment is available at Oregon institutions of higher education for eligible service members, veterans, and their dependents. Oregon community colleges and universities also provide in-state tuition for eligible veterans at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Finally, tuition waivers are available for eligible children and spouses to pursue a bachelor's or master's degree for only the cost of fees, pursuant to the Veterans Dependent Tuition Waiver Program. These waivers are available to the dependents of Purple Heart recipients awarded from 2001 going forward; or of veterans who died while on active duty or from a disability sustained while on active duty; or of veterans who are 100 percent disabled from military service.

**Bill Summary:** Senate Bill 689 allows dependents of service members who are considered residents at the time of their admission to a community college or public university, to remain so for as long as they are continuously enrolled.

**Oregon Laws 2019:** Chapter 264

[Senate Bill 690](#)

Effective Date: June 11, 2019

**Maintaining Participation in Interstate Compact for Military Children**

**Committees:** Senate Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, Senate Education, House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, House Education

**Background and Current Law:** In 2014, Senate Bill 1506 was enacted, enabling Oregon to participate in the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (Compact). The Compact is concerned with the smooth transfer of students from school to school, who are the children of military parents. An interstate compact functions like a contract among participating states: each state enacts substantially similar provisions and avoids making unilateral changes to material terms to provide relative consistency from state to state. Oregon's participation in the Compact is scheduled to sunset December 31, 2019.

**Bill Summary:** Senate Bill 690 maintains Oregon's participation in the Compact by lifting the sunset and modifies its provisions consistent with its current operation: adding the Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction and members of State Board of Education to the Compact council; changing meetings from every three months, to annually; and replacing the Oregon Military Department with the Department of Education for staffing purposes.

**Oregon Laws 2019:** Chapter 339

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[Senate Bill 938](#)

Not Enacted

**Funding Construction of Veterans' Home**

**Chief Sponsors:** Sen. Heard; Reps. Evans, Leif

**Committees:** Senate Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, Joint Ways and Means

**Background and Current Law:** There are currently two Veterans' Homes in Oregon that provide qualifying veterans with long-term care, one in The Dalles and one in Lebanon, and Oregon law provides for two more. Admittance to a Veterans' Home is a benefit that honorably discharged veterans have earned, that extends to their spouses and to the parents of children who died serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.

**Bill Summary:** Senate Bill 938 would have authorized the State Treasurer to issue general obligation bonds under Article XI-Q of the Oregon Constitution to produce \$17,500,000 net proceeds for the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) to construct a veterans' home in Roseburg, Oregon.

[Senate Concurrent Resolution 12](#)

Filed with Secretary of State

**Commemorating the Modoc War of 1872-1873**

**Chief Sponsors:** Sen. Girod

**Committees:** Senate Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

**Background and Current Law:** The Modoc War of 1872-1873 was the most expensive hostile engagement of the Indian Wars for the United States at the time, in terms of both the financial cost and the number of casualties. The Modocs lived along the Lost River in what is now southern Oregon and northern California. They were party to the 1864 treaty with the United States, the Klamath, and the Yahooskin tribes, which dislocated the Modocs to the Klamath Reservation. They complied initially but became disillusioned over time, and by 1870, many had returned to their villages along the Lost River. On November 29, 1872, the U.S. Army attempted to force the Modocs back to the Klamath Reservation. The Battle of Lost River ensued, which became known as the Modoc War. There were casualties on both sides and the Modocs retreated to a traditional stronghold in the lava beds south of Tule Lake. A much larger U.S. Army force attempted to dislodge them but failed. The federal government sought to negotiate and during a truce period, on April 11, 1873, a group of Modocs killed peace commissioner Reverend Eleazer Thomas and General Edward Canby, the highest-ranking Army officer to be killed during the Indian Wars. Not long after, on May 10, 1873, the Modocs were decisively defeated in the Battle of Dry Lake. A half-dozen were captured and tried by a military court. Two were sentenced to life imprisonment and four were hanged at Fort Klamath, including a principal headman and venerated Modoc leader, Kintpuash, who was among the signatories to the 1864 treaty. The remaining members of the Modoc tribe, around 150, were herded into rail cars and sent to the Indian Territory (Oklahoma) as prisoners of war. Thirty-six years later, in 1909, after Oklahoma became a state, 29 Modocs returned to Oregon. The Lava Beds National Monument preserves many of the battle sites and some of the Modoc's ancestral lands. A memorial plaque in Gillems Cemetery there lists the names of all who died: United States Army personnel and civilians as well as Modoc warriors and their families.

**Bill Summary:** Senate Concurrent Resolution 12 memorializes Kintpuash and the Modoc War of 1872-1873, commemorates the tragic loss of all life, and expresses regret for the expulsion of the Modoc tribe from their ancestral lands in Oregon.

[Senate Concurrent Resolution 20](#)

Filed with Secretary of State

**Recognizing the USS *McGinty***

**Chief Sponsors:** Sen. Olsen

**Committees:** Senate Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

**Background and Current Law:** The USS *McGinty* was a destroyer escort of the *John C. Butler* class commissioned in 1944, crewed by 14 officers and 201 enlisted personnel. She deployed on several major assignments during World War II and earned three battle stars for her service during the Korean War. She was decommissioned in 1959 and assigned to Reserve Escort Division 13 at the Swan Island Naval Reserve Center in Portland, manned by a Navy Reserve crew that included many Oregonians. Her mission was to train naval reservists to maintain operational and combat readiness. In 1961, she mobilized under presidential order and sailed to Hawaii as flagship for Escort Squadron 7 of the Seventh Fleet. During this deployment, the USS *McGinty* sailed to Vietnam to train personnel of the Republic of Vietnam in Saigon and on the Mekong River. She returned to Portland in 1962 and continued to train reservists until 1968, while also responding to natural disasters, including a severe flood in 1964 that affected much of Oregon and northern California.

**Bill Summary:** Senate Concurrent Resolution 20 recognizes the service of the USS *McGinty* and her crew

## VETERANS

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### [House Bill 2195-A](#)

Not Enacted

#### Vietnam War Memorial

**At the request of:** House Interim Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

**Committees:** House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, Joint Ways and Means

**Background and Current Law:** Vietnam War memorials in Oregon are located in Beaverton, Bend, Canby, Eagle Point, Enterprise, Eugene, Portland, Richland, Rogue River, and Salem. The State Capitol grounds currently contain a replica of the Liberty Bell, statues of influential Oregonians, memorials to the state's Medal of Honor recipients, flags for the 50 states and nine federally recognized Native American tribes, and the Oregon World War II Memorial.

**Bill Summary:** House Bill 2195-A would have dedicated a portion of the State Capitol State Park to a new Vietnam War memorial. The Act would have established a Vietnam War Memorial Task Force to develop, design, and construct the memorial and would have directed the Department of Veterans' Affairs to maintain the finished memorial.

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### [House Bill 2200-A](#)

Not Enacted

#### Veterans' Loan Fund

**At the request of:** House Interim Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

**Committees:** House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, Joint Ways and Means

**Background and Current Law:** Many veterans experience financial hardship related to previous deployments, physical or mental health issues, employment transition from military service to the private sector, or other issues.

**Bill Summary:** House Bill 2200-A would have created a revolving Veterans' Loan Fund to allow the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs to assist eligible veterans with medical care, educational benefits, disability benefits, or aid, attendance, or housebound benefits of up to \$5,000, and would have allocated \$500,000 to the fund.

[House Bill 2201](#)

Effective Date: July 1, 2019

**Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program**

**At the request of:** House Interim Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

**Committees:** House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, Joint Ways and Means

**Background and Current Law:** There are numerous federal and state programs to assist veterans in furthering their education within the university system, professional training, or apprenticeship programs. However, veterans are sometimes unable to complete a degree program due to one or more required courses not being offered until a later date, despite being enrolled in an approved course of study that qualifies for U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs benefits and being eligible to receive federal financial assistance.

**Bill Summary:** House Bill 2201 establishes the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program to provide up to \$5,000 assistance to each eligible veteran who is waiting for a required course to be offered to complete their educational program on time. The measure allocates \$447,719 to the grant program.

**Oregon Laws 2019:** Chapter 527

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[House Bill 2202](#)

Effective Date: January 1, 2020

**Oregon Veteran Job Opportunities**

**At the request of:** House Interim Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

**Committees:** House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, Joint Ways and Means

**Background and Current Law:** According to the Oregon Employment Department, the unemployment rate for veterans in Oregon in 2017 was 4.3 percent, slightly higher than the overall state average of 4.1 percent. Approximately 152,000 Oregon veterans were in the labor force in 2017; of these, approximately 123,000 were employed full-time, and another 22,000 were employed part-time. Veterans made up approximately 7.2 percent of the unemployed population in 2017, whereas for the 20 years prior, they comprised 6.9 to 14.6 percent of the state's unemployed population.

**Bill Summary:** House Bill 2202 directs the Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) to develop and administer an outreach program to former members of Oregon National Guard and Reserve to inform them of careers in the trades and to connect them to apprenticeship opportunities and allocates \$250,000 from the Veterans' Services Fund for the program.

**Oregon Laws 2019:** Chapter 528

[House Bill 2203-A](#)

Not Enacted

**County Veterans' Courts**

**At the request of:** House Interim Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

**Committees:** House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, Joint Ways and Means

**Background and Current Law:** Military service, particularly combat experience, can have long-term adverse health effects on veterans. Veterans' treatment courts use a hybrid integration of drug courts and mental health courts to serve military veterans and, in some cases, active-duty personnel, by promoting sobriety, recovery, and stability through a coordinated and collaborative response system with drug court and mental health court partners, as well as the Department of Veterans' Affairs and other agencies and organizations that support veterans.

**Bill Summary:** House Bill 2203-A would have directed the Criminal Justice Commission to develop and implement a competitive grant program to provide funding to Oregon counties for the establishment and support of county veterans' courts. The measure would have also appropriated \$500,000 from the General Fund to the Commission for the program.

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[House Bill 2204-A](#)

Not Enacted

**Reserve Officer Training Academy Pilot Program**

**At the request of:** House Interim Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

**Committees:** House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, Joint Ways and Means

**Background and Current Law:** The Oregon Criminal Justice Commission's mission is to improve the legitimacy, efficiency, and effectiveness of state and local criminal justice systems. A reserve officer is a law enforcement official who is a volunteer or is employed less than full-time as a peace officer, is armed with a firearm, and who is responsible for enforcing the criminal and traffic laws of the state, or laws and ordinances relating to airport security.

**Bill Summary:** House Bill 2204-A would have directed the Criminal Justice Commission to establish a pilot program to award a grant to a law enforcement agency or local government to fund the creation and operation of a reserve officer training academy. The measure would have appropriated \$500,000 to the Criminal Justice Commission for the grant.

[House Bill 2211](#)

Effective Date: January 1, 2020

**Entrepreneurial Loans to Disabled Veterans**

**At the request of:** House Interim Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development

**Committees:** House Business and Labor, Senate Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

**Background and Current Law:** The Oregon Business Development Department (Business Oregon) administers an Entrepreneurial Development Loan program for businesses that meet at least one of the following criteria: the business owner is certified as having a severe disability by the Oregon Department of Human Services or the Commission for the Blind; and/or the business has \$500,000 or less in revenue in the 12 months preceding application. Applicants must also meet additional criteria, such as being enrolled in a small business counseling program. The maximum loan amount is \$75,000 (\$100,000 total loans), with a maximum term and amortization period of five years and a minimum fixed interest rate of Prime plus two percent.

**Bill Summary:** House Bill 2211 includes qualifying disabled veterans among business owners who are eligible for an Entrepreneurial Development Loan from the Oregon Business Development Department.

**Oregon Laws 2019:** Chapter 394

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[House Bill 2530](#)

Effective Date: January 1, 2020

**Tenant Termination Notices for Veterans**

**Chief Sponsors:** Reps. Evans, Wilde

**Committees:** House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, Senate Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

**Background and Current Law:** According to data presented by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the State of Oregon had an estimated 1,251 veterans experiencing homelessness in January 2017. Since that time, homelessness among military veterans has increased by nine percent, to 1,363, according to HUD statistics from November 2018. Whenever tenancies terminate in eviction or foreclosure, certain notice and documents must be provided to renters or homeowners, to inform them about the process, what to do, and any corresponding deadlines.

**Bill Summary:** House Bill 2530 requires certain notices to renters and homeowners regarding termination of tenancy to include information about assistance that may be available for eligible veterans, as well as contact information for the county veterans' service officer, community action agency, or 2-1-1 referral service.

**Oregon Laws 2019:** Chapter 405

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[House Bill 2892](#)

**Effective Date: June 4, 2019**

**Military Uniforms at Graduation Ceremonies**

**Chief Sponsors:** Reps. Bonham, Wilde, Hernandez

**Committees:** House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness, Senate Education

**Background and Current Law:** Under current law, Oregon school districts may determine appropriate dress for students at high school graduation ceremonies. Some districts require graduation robes to be the most outwardly visible garment worn, which may be in violation of military rules. Other states have passed legislation to allow students to wear military uniforms at graduation, including California, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey.

**Bill Summary:** House Bill 2892 requires school districts and public charter schools to allow a student who has completed basic training for, and is an active member of, a branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, to wear a military dress uniform at a high school graduation ceremony.

**Oregon Laws 2019:** Chapter 210

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[House Bill 3030](#)

**Effective Date: September 29, 2019**

**Professional Licensing for Military Spouses**

**Chief Sponsors:** Reps. McLane, Reschke, Clem, Bynum; Sens. Linthicum, Olsen

**Committees:** House Business and Labor, Senate Business and General Government

**Background and Current Law:** The National Conference of State Legislatures reports that 66 percent of military spouses are in the workforce, and that 25 percent of military spouses have a bachelor's degree and 10 percent hold an advanced degree. Despite their level of education, nearly one-third of military spouses are underemployed. According to a 2015 report on occupational licensing issued by the White House, more than 25 percent of workers are doing work that requires a license, with most of those licenses being issued by a state agency.

**Bill Summary:** House Bill 3030 allows state licensing agencies to issue a temporary authorization to individuals who are married to a member of the U.S. Armed Forces serving in Oregon if the individual holds a license from another state, is in good standing with that out-of-state licensing board, and demonstrates competency. A separate measure (Senate Bill 688) modified this program to require licensing agencies to issue temporary authorizations and to report annually to the Legislative Assembly.

**Oregon Laws 2019:** Chapter 142