



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Bill allows soldiers' spouses to take leave prior to loved one's deployment

HB 2744 allows up to two weeks unpaid leave for employees of companies with 25 or more workers

SALEM –Military husbands and wives will be allowed to take time off from work when their spouses are home from or preparing for service abroad with legislation passed this morning in the Senate. HB 2744 will give spouses of members of the Armed Forces, National Guard or Military Reserve up to 14 days of unpaid leave if said spouse works for an employer with more than 25 employees.

“Oregon’s National Guard just went through the largest troop deployment since World War II,” said Senator Alan Bates (D-Ashland), who carried the bill on the floor. “There are a lot of families out there who just had to say goodbye to their loved ones. We hope this bill will give those families a little more time when their husband or wife comes home on leave.”

Between 300 and 500 members of the Oregon National Guard return on a monthly basis from service in Iraq or Afghanistan. Estimates are that the majority of them are married. Oregon law does not currently provide for leave from employment for military spouses to allow them to spend time with their serving spouse.

“Our military and their families sacrifice so much for their service to our country,” said Senator Martha Schrader (D-Canby), a member of the Governor's Task Force for Veterans' Affairs. “In this small way we can help ease the heartache of deployment on service members and their families by making it easier to take time off work.”

The bill will now go to the Governor for his signature.

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