



SENATE REPUBLICAN OFFICE

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Defunding veterans is a moral outrage, bait-and-switch politics at its finest

SALEM, Ore.-Today, ahead of a public hearing on the state's veterans services budget, Senate Republicans sounded the alarm that veterans could face painful cuts under the Democrat-controlled Legislature.

A narrative has emerged in the Democrat-controlled Legislature that voter-supported ballot measures, like Measure 96, a veterans services ballot proposal, impact our current budget reality. What many in Oregon may not know is that the Legislature unanimously passed House Joint Resolution 202, which referred the constitutional amendment proposal to voters. Now, they are backtracking.

Senate Republicans called defunding veterans "a moral outrage" that amounts to "bait-and-switch politics":

"Senate Republicans refuse to support the Democrat-majority's proposed slashes to veterans, among others. We will not allow Democrats to turn their backs on those who have served our country. Veterans keep their promises to us, we must keep our promises to them."

Measure 96 aimed to generate additional funding for Oregon veterans. The proposal passed overwhelmingly in November. In fact, [83.76 percent of Oregonians supported the proposal](#).

If that funding was maintained this budget cycle and the lottery funds totaled \$18 million as projected, that would equal about \$31 million dollars for veterans services, according to [KOB1-5](#). Current budget proposals by Democrats fail to honor the promise made to voters and more importantly the promise made to veterans.

Republicans have issued statements in the past on this issue. State Sen. Kim Thatcher, R-Keizer, said in [March](#):

"Oregonians recognize we have a moral obligation to take care of our veterans. They expressed that in their overwhelming support to increase funding for veterans at the ballot box. The governor's defunding of veterans amounts to a bait-and-switch not only to veterans, but also to Oregon voters."

In [February](#), Hood River Republican state Sen. Chuck Thomsen's criticisms were strong. He says slashing veterans services by millions and millions of dollars, "flies in the faces of 84 percent of Oregonians." Thomsen noted that this is clearly not a partisan issue among Oregonians.

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