

May 5, 2015



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Oregon Progressive Party Position on Bill at 2015 Session of Oregon Legislature: HB 2892

Dear Committee:

HB 2892A requires that the POW-MIA flag be flown from flagpoles at all Oregon government buildings and all county courthouses every day of every year. Additional POW-MIA flags must be procured for buildings that do not have them. All new public buildings would be required to have facilities to fly the POW-MIA flag, along with the flags of the USA and Oregon.

Oregon would join Idaho as the states requiring that the POW-MIA flag be flown from state buildings every day. The U.S. Government flies the POW-MIA flag on only six federal holidays.

The only exception, under HB 2892A, is if the public building does not have "existing flagpoles or other infrastructure installed to property display all three flags" (USA flag, Oregon flag, and POW-MIA flag). But all it takes to display all 3 flags is a single flagpole, because all the flags can be flown from the same pole.

We support this idea to make Oregon government buildings public forums for prominent display of political or social symbols to be chosen by Oregon legislators. The Legislative Fiscal Office has concluded that requiring procurement of additional POW-MIA flags and flying them every day on every government building will have "Minimal Expenditure Impact" on state or local government. A flag that is flown every day wears out, so there will be a continuous need to buy new flags. It appears that flags are so inexpensive that this cost is too small to worry about.

HB 2892A should be amended to require all Oregon government buildings to fly, every day, dozens or hundreds of other flags with political or social significance. As there are too many of them for one, two, or three flagpoles, they should be rotated to achieve equal exposure.

Naturally, we recommend the flag of the Oregon Progressive Party, which adorns this letter. Among the other many thousands of eligible flags would be these:



American Heart Association Flag



American Lung Association Flag



Farm Workers Flag



World Peace Flag



Climate Flag



Ecology Flag



Rainbow Flag of LGBT



Recycling Flag

Oregon can be in the forefront of using government property for selected political and social communication.

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