

Joint Committee on Veteran and Military Affairs Minutes

October 3, 2011, Meeting

Washington Soldiers Home at Orting

1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Members present: Senator Roach, Co-Chair; Representative Orwall, Co-Chair; Senator Kilmer; Senator Conway; Representative Klippert; Representative McCune.

The meeting began at 1:30 p.m.

Several items on the agenda were moved to the November 30, 2011, meeting in the interest of time. The discussion of future topics and tours ideas; a discussion about the future of the Orting Soldiers Home; and a presentation about the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) will be addressed during a later committee hearing.

The Committee heard a presentation from Mary Forbes and Ray Switzer with the Washington Department of Veteran Affairs. Specifically, the Committee heard about a program at Building 9 for veterans who are homeless and many of the inhabitants have suffered from substance abuse. The Building 9 program is to allow veterans to become self-sustaining in the community. The program assists veterans with access to benefits, employment, substance abuse counseling, and mental health counseling if necessary.

The Committee heard a presentation about the efforts to address Joint Base Lewis McCord traffic congestion. Kelly Simpson, Senate Transportation Committee, presented along with Christie Parker of the House Transportation Committee. Possible improvements have been identified but the ongoing economic situation of the state creates a hardship with funding. Options identified include ramp meters, adding additional lanes, van pools, additional traffic cameras, and interchange improvements including an extra gate for access to the base.

The Committee approved and formally adopted the minutes from the previous meeting held on July 28, 2011.

A recording of the October 3, 2011, JCVMA hearing can be accessed at the following location:

<http://www.avcaptureall.com/Sessions.aspx#session.84302d16-18e4-49e1-8016-970af7edcd41>

The next hearing of the JCVMA is currently scheduled to take place on November 30, 2011, in SHR 1 of the Cherberg Building in Olympia.