

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued

Action:	Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed and Be Referred to the Committee on Ways and Means by prior reference
Vote:	7 - 0 - 1
Yeas:	Edwards C., Garrard, Gelsner, Jenson, Nolan, Read, Roblan
Nays:	0
Exc.:	Berger
Prepared By:	Jerry Watson, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	5/11

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Establishes a requirement for state and partner agencies to develop and implement a veterans' outreach program. Directs Department of Veterans' Affairs to establish a website that allows members of public to request information about veterans' benefits and services and enter contact information. Requires Department to coordinate outreach to persons who request information. Directs Department to report before October 1 of each even-numbered year to the appropriate legislative interim committees on Department's outreach to veterans. Requires state agencies as defined in ORS 183.310 to include on agency's website a link to the website established in this proposed Act. Directs Department to provide agencies and county governments with printed informational materials on how to request information about veterans' benefits. Requires agencies and county governments to make information available in offices accessible to the public and to make reasonable efforts to provide information to customers or clients during face-to-face contacts. Requires agency directors to prepare a report to appropriate interim committees of the Legislative Assembly on the effectiveness of measures taken to implement provisions applicable to agencies.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Purpose of the measure
- Provisions of the proposed measure as amended

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Replaces the original measure.

BACKGROUND: One of the Governor's Task Force on Veterans' Services Final Report (December 2008) top findings was that substantial amounts of federal aid (in benefit & compensation payments and health programming) are consistently unrealized because of a systemic failure of state, regional, and local public agencies to ask customer/client veterans' status. Currently, state agencies do not proactively ask customers/clients if they are veterans or proactively provide information to those veterans. The task force noted that the state receives \$162 return on investment for every \$1 invested in a veteran from federal reimbursements.

Recognizing the value in federal benefits reimbursements, the Utah Department of Veterans Affairs and that state's Department of Motor Vehicles initiated efforts to identify veterans—resulting in the discovery of 70,000 veterans that were not receiving benefits. In Oregon, only 22 percent of veterans are identified through the U.S. Census in the state system. Proponents assert that this lack of a statewide agency systematic approach foregoes \$4 billion in revenue of federal reimbursements to Oregon.

House Bill 3104 targets all agencies statewide to revisit, reengineer and execute a flexible and cost efficient mechanism that identifies and redirects Oregon veterans data to ensure federal reimbursement to the state.

5/14/2009 5:07:00 PM

This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.