

**REVENUE:** No revenue impact

**FISCAL:** Fiscal statement issued

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<b>Action:</b>	Do Adopt the A-Engrossed Measure
<b>Vote:</b>	4 - 0 - 1
<b>Yeas:</b>	Boquist, Ferrioli, Metsger, Devlin
<b>Nays:</b>	-
<b>Exc.:</b>	Burdick
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Erin Seiler, Administrator
<b>Meeting Dates:</b>	6/2, 6/10

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:** Proposes amendment to the Oregon Constitution relating to eligibility to receive loan from Oregon War Veterans' Fund. Removes the term "war" as it pertains to the Oregon War Veterans' Fund. Extends eligibility to qualified veterans who have been out of service for more than 30 years. Removes the state residency requirement for the surviving spouse of a veteran who died while on active duty, provided the spouse has not remarried and lives in state at the time of application for the loan. Refers proposed amendment to voters for their approval or rejection the 2010 General Election.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Increases accessing to all veterans who qualify for low-interest ORVET home loan
- Aligning statutory definition of veteran with the constitutional definition
- Ensuring home loan eligibility is a lifetime benefit for all veterans
- Outreach conducted by the Governor's Task Force on Veterans' Services

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:** No amendment.

**BACKGROUND:** The Oregon Constitution denies veterans who have been out of service for more than 30 years eligibility for the ORVET home loan program. One recommendation from the *Governor's Task Force on Veterans' Services Final Report (December 2008)* is to ensure the ORVET home loan program is aligned with the federal Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) lifetime benefit for home loans. House Joint Resolution 7-A is a proposed amendment to the Oregon Constitution to change eligibility requirements for the ORVET home loan program. The five major modifications include:

- Removing the term "war" from the definition of veteran in the Oregon Constitution to broaden eligible qualified applicants
- Use of term "veteran" as defined by ORS 488.225 to ensure more post-9/11 veterans are eligible
- Extension to veterans who served a period of active duty under honorable conditions
- Allowance for the spouse of a qualified veteran who is either missing in action or was a prisoner of war, but who never resided in the state to qualify, if he/she is the sole survivor to qualify
- Excludes active duty schooling, unless military schooling was in relation to an active enlistment, regular tour of duty, or normal military training as a National Guard/Reserve citizen-soldier.

House Joint Resolution 7-A also requires passage of companion bill, House Bill 3470, to take effect.