

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

Action: Do Pass as Amended, Be Printed Engrossed, and Be Placed on the Consent Calendar

Vote: 8 - 0 - 0

Yeas: Boone, Esquivel, Freeman, Komp, Matthews, Riley, Weidner, Cowan

Nays: 0

Exc.: 0

Prepared By: David Molina, Administrator

Meeting Dates: 3/3

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Standardizes the definition of veteran in Oregon Revised Statutes from six definitions to all reflect one definition as defined in ORS 408.225.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Inconsistency across veteran definitions
- Challenges presented to veterans by the current statute
- Definition changes do not impact veterans currently receiving benefits
- Current definition limits Department of Veterans Affairs (ODVA) ability to include post-9/11 veterans

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Ensures Korean and World War II veterans' currently receiving veterans' property tax exemptions continues. Adds disabled veterans with a disability rating from the Veterans Administration (VA) to definition of veteran. Adds Expeditionary Medal to Combat and Campaign ribbons (e.g. Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal). Establishes recipients who receive non-service connected pensions from the federal VA are considered veterans by both the VA and ODVA.

BACKGROUND: The Oregon Revised Statutes currently contain six different definitions of veteran, including: ORS 174.105, relating to property tax exemption; 348.282, relating to troopers to teachers program; 408.225, relating to veteran preference in state employment; 408.305, relating to state aid to veterans for medical issues related to Agent Orange; 408.350, relating to hepatitis education; and, 408.500, relating to emergency grants. None of the six current definitions is consistent with the others.

Senate Bill 96-A defines veteran as stated in ORS 408.225 to standardize one definition that is consistent in statute. Proponents of the measure assert that the various current definitions cause confusion for veterans seeking benefits and referrals and for state agencies providing these services. The measure has no impact on the Oregon Constitution's definition of war veteran and/or the War Veteran Fund.

3/10/2009 4:15 PM

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