REVENUE: No revenue impact
FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action:	Be Adopted
Vote:	3 - 0 - 2
Yeas:	Morrisette, Morse, Monnes Anderson
Nays:	0
Exc.:	Bates, Kruse
Prepared By:	Robert Shook, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	2/17, 2/24

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Urges Congress to enact legislation providing complete health care for all honorably discharged veterans and their dependents.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:
- Categories of access to health care
- Financial means testing for eligibility

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No Amendment.

BACKGROUND: The 75th Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon urges Congress of the United States to enact legislation that increases funding levels for the US Department of Veterans Affairs to meet honorably discharged veterans' health care requirements and universal health care access for all honorably discharged veterans and their families.

The US Veterans Health Administration regulates access to its health care system by creating categories of care. There are eight categories, and several subcategories. Veterans are divided into categories based upon disability rating levels, and must meet a financial means test. If a veteran's income is above the means level, that veteran does not qualify for medical care. In Oregon, 80,000 veterans are enrolled and qualify for medical care. Approximately 270,000 Oregon veterans are not qualified, but may be enrolled in other healthcare plans, or have no health care coverage at all. SJM 3 urges Congress to fully fund all categories of veterans' health care.

Veterans who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan suffer high rates of traumatic brain injuries and other debilitating injuries, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and other mental health conditions, and it may take months for veterans to receive needed medical treatment. Fully funding health care for veterans is timely and critical.