

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued

Action: Do Pass and Be Referred to the Committee on Ways and Means by prior reference

Vote: 5 - 0 - 1

Yeas: Boone, Huffman, Parrish, Esquivel, Witt

Nays: 0

Exc.: Matthews

Prepared By: Jill Petty, Administrator

Meeting Dates: 2/8, 2/15

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Directs Department of Veterans' Affairs to develop and implement program to encourage women veterans to utilize veterans' health care benefits. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Role of women in Veterans Administration
- Demographics of women self identifying as veterans
- Larger percentage of women veterans from Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom utilizing Veterans Administration benefits
- Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care (Task Force) recommends outreach to women veterans

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: Statistics provided by the Government Accounting Office indicate women make up 7.7 percent of the veteran population and are expected to increase by 17 percent from 2008 to 2033. The 2009 Legislature passed House Bill 2718 to create a Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care (Task Force) and submit a report to the Legislature. The current number of women veterans utilizing their veterans' benefits is 29 percent. The Task Force has identified benefits outreach and education to women veterans as a priority.