

Joint Committee on Ways and Means

Carrier – House: Rep. Esquivel
Carrier – Senate: Sen. Bates

Revenue: No revenue impact

Fiscal: Fiscal statement issued

Action: Do Pass the A-Engrossed Measure

Vote: 22 – 0 – 3

House

Yeas: Beyer, Buckley, Cowan, Garrard, Komp, McLane, Nathanson, Nolan, Richardson,
G. Smith, Thatcher, Whisnant

Nays:

Exc: Freeman, Kotek

Senate

Yeas: Devlin, Edwards, Girod, Johnson, Monroe, Nelson, Thomsen, Verger, Whitsett, Winters

Nays:

Exc: Bates

Prepared By: Kim To, Legislative Fiscal Office

Meeting Date: May 20, 2011

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Modifies the statute related to filing Oregon death certificates. If a decedent's death was caused by suicide, the bill requires the person submitting a death certificate to notify the State Registrar of the Center for Health Statistics through the electronic death certificate system if the decedent was a veteran, and if so, if the decedent served in combat and where s/he served. The bill is effective on January 1, 2012.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Possibility of expanding data collection to other causes of death, not just suicide
- Costs associated with modifying death certificate
- Potentially tight time frame for OHA to complete system modification

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (Department) released preliminary data which indicated the suicide rate among 18 to 29 year-old men who have left the military rose 26 percent from 2005 to 2007. The Department estimates that in 2005 there were 44.99 suicides per 100,000 veterans, compared to 56.77 suicides per 100,000 veterans in 2007. The rate of suicide among veterans in Oregon is uncertain due to inadequate statistics because current law does not require that information on veterans who commit suicide to be collected.

House Bill 3611 requires the person submitting the death certificate to make a reasonable effort to determine if the person was a veteran and where the person served in an effort to provide more accurate statistics on veterans who commit suicide.