

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

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Action: Do Pass

Vote: 6 - 0 - 2

Yeas: Barnhart, Freeman, Holvey, Wingard, Hunt, Olson

Nays: -

Exc.: Berger, Garrett

Prepared By: Jim Stenbridge, Administrator

Meeting Dates: 5/18, 5/19

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:** Directs Adjutant General to form commission of five individuals to develop and name a medal to honor Oregon's fallen military members. Directs that the Commission membership, in addition to the Adjutant General, be two Assistant Adjutant Generals and two veterans' service officers. Directs Commission to present the design to the Governor, and, if the design is approved, directs the Governor to present the proposed medal to the 2013 Legislative Assembly for its approval.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Search for appropriate honor for military members killed in the line of duty
- Memorial services and importance of attempting to comfort family members
- Design of keepsake for families
- Previous legislative efforts leading up to this measure

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

**BACKGROUND:** House Bill 3658 calls for the development and naming of a medal only, not the development of criteria for awarding the medal, not the actual creation of the medal, and not the awarding of the medal. The Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs provides veteran service officers (VSOs) free-of-charge to assist veterans and their families with applying for benefits. State VSOs are also available in most counties or through National Service Organizations, such as the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Vietnam Veterans of America. According to the Salem *Statesman Journal*, at least 113 members of the military with strong Oregon ties have died during service in Iraq and Afghanistan. The State of Ohio awards a similar recognition, as described in the following story from the Associated Press:

COLUMBUS, Ohio, Wednesday Nov 10, 2010 — State lawmakers have honored 190 Ohio service members who have died in U.S. combat operations since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. The Ohio General Assembly on Wednesday posthumously awarded 190 service members with the Ohio Military Medal of Distinction. The medal was created by law in 2009 to pay tribute to Ohioans who lost their lives fighting in overseas conflicts. The medals were the first to be handed out under the new law. Gov. Ted Strickland and state leaders presented the medals to the soldiers' families at a ceremony several blocks away from the state Capitol.