

SB 762
Relating to veterans

Senate Bill 762-A requires the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs to coordinate a public information campaign about suicide prevention for veterans. These efforts are to be funded through a new voluntary contribution check-off box on individual income tax return forms, and a new voluntary contribution at the time of online vehicle registration. ODVA uses a variety of platforms to communicate with veterans. The agency will leverage its existing partnerships, social media venues, training opportunities, newsletters and email distribution lists to make veterans and their advocates aware of existing suicide prevention services available through the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs, the National Guard, and relevant non-profit organizations such as Lines for Life.

The Transportation and Economic Development Subcommittee recommends Senate Bill 762-A be reported out do pass.

Joint Committee on Ways and Means

Carrier – House: Rep. McKeown
Carrier – Senate: Sen. Hansell

Revenue: No revenue impact

Fiscal: Fiscal statement issued

Action: Do Pass the A-Engrossed Measure

Vote:

House

Yeas:

Nays:

Exc:

Senate

Yeas:

Nays:

Exc:

Prepared By: Michelle Deister, Legislative Fiscal Office

Meeting Date: June 25, 2013

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Creates suicide prevention program within Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs (ODVA) to coordinate public information campaign. Establishes accounting structure. Adds voluntary contribution check-off box on individual income tax return forms, and permits voluntary contribution at time of online vehicle registration renewal. Requires ODVA increase scope of service provision via alternative means, in addition to use of county veterans service officers. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Rates of suicide among Oregon veterans
- Communication tools used by ODVA
- Donation vehicles available to fund outreach
- The various crisis hotlines offering services to veterans

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: According to a report published in September 2010 by the Oregon Department of Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Epidemiology, Injury and Violence Prevention Program, there are more injury-related deaths in Oregon due to suicide than due to car crashes. The age-adjusted suicide rate among Oregonians in 2007 was 35 percent higher than the national average, and suicide rates have been increasing since 2000. At the time the report was published, approximately 27 percent of suicides occurred among veterans. Senate Bill 762A adds a suicide prevention program to the mix of outreach and other services administered by the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs, funded by voluntary contributions. ODVA would utilize its existing partnerships, social media venues, training opportunities, newsletters and email distribution lists to make veterans and their advocates aware of existing suicide prevention services available through the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs, the National Guard and Lines for Life (a non-profit organization).

FISCAL IMPACT OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION**Measure: SB 762 - A**Seventy-Seventh Oregon Legislative Assembly – 2013 Regular Session
Legislative Fiscal Office***Only Impacts on Original or Engrossed
Versions are Considered Official***

Prepared by: Krista McDowell
Reviewed by: Linda Gilbert, Michelle Deister, John Borden
Date: 5/7/2013

Measure Description:

Directs Department of Veterans' Affairs to create and coordinate public information campaign to prevent suicide by veterans.

Government Unit(s) Affected:

Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), Department of Revenue (DOR), Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA)

Summary of Expenditure Impact:

See Analysis

Local Government Mandate:

This bill does not affect local governments' service levels or shared revenues sufficient to trigger Section 15, Article XI of the Oregon Constitution.

Analysis:

The bill allows a registered owner of a vehicle to make a donation to the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) Suicide Prevention and Outreach Program Fund when the owner initially registers a vehicle or renews a vehicle's registration. The potential revenue generated by this program is indeterminate; expenditures relating to the prevention and outreach program will be driven by the amount of revenue available.

ODVA reports they will utilize existing FTE to implement workload related to the provisions of this bill. Personnel resources will be used to build a secure webpage that will link to the ODOT vehicle renewal webpage, and provide a mechanism for which money may be donated to the Suicide Prevention and Outreach Program Fund. A 2% transaction fee will be assessed to each donation and paid to a merchant account; the remaining 98% of the donation will be deposited into the ODVA Suicide Prevention and Outreach Program Fund without passing through the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT) accounting systems.

ODOT will utilize existing FTE resources to create a link on the vehicle renewal webpage that will direct customers to the ODVA webpage. Since provisions of this bill are not an eligible use of State Highway Funds this work will be implemented and ongoing administration of this portion of the website will be funded using the Transportation Operating Fund.

ODVA will use money generated from this legislation to promote awareness of existing programs by United States Department of Veterans Affairs, the National Guard and Life Lines (a non-profit organization) which are directed at helping veterans and their family members with suicidal and crisis situations. Media platforms that ODVA plans to utilize to promote these programs and services include the agency's website, facebook, an e-subscribe system, suicide awareness brochures and the Veteran Benefit magazine. All of these platforms are currently developed and managed internally by ODVA with existing resources. To the extent additional revenue is available, ODVA may also purchase a media buying package, at a cost of \$5,000 a month, which would secure billboard space, bus billboards or radio air time for the promotion of these programs and services.