

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: 25 – 0 – 1

House

Yeas: Barker, Buckley, Frederick, Freeman, Hanna, Huffman, Jenson, Komp, Nathanson, Read, Richardson, Smith, Tomei, Williamson

Nays:

Exc: McLane

Senate

Yeas: Bates, Devlin, Edwards, Girod, Hansell, Johnson, Monroe, Steiner Hayward, Thomsen, Whitsett, Winters

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).