



## OREGON DEPARTMENT of VETERANS' AFFAIRS

### Senate Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness Testimony on Senate Bill 87 -1 Amendments | April 21, 2014

Senate Bill 87 is an important bill for veterans, public employers and the public because it provides a fair, clear and meaningful method for applying veterans' preference in the hiring process. Existing veterans' preference statutes are unclear, confusing and provide no guidance on implementation for employers.

**The SB 87 -1 amendments create a higher standard for interviewing veterans than current law, create a higher standard for veterans than non-veterans, and do not grant a greater preference to disabled veterans than veterans for the interview process.** The amendments revert to current law, move two definitions, create two definitions, and require employers to interview only veterans who have all skills for a position.

1. Deletes all language in SB 87 and reverts back to current statutes.  
The purpose of SB 87 was to clarify the law, define terms, use clear language, create uniform implementation processes, and define the legislative intent.
  - **Problem:** There is broad agreement that current law is problematic. Reverting back to current law does not resolve these problems and address the issues that SB 87 addresses.
2. Moves definitions, "eligibility list" and "transferable skills", from ORS 408.237 to ORS 408.225.  
This is non-substantive housekeeping change.
3. Adds two definitions ("requested and required skills") and requires employers to interview veterans who have "requested skills, required skills, and transferable skills."

Current law requires employers to interview every veteran who meets the minimum qualifications and special qualifications. In addition, a veteran must have "transferable skills" required and requested.

The amendment requires the employer to "interview each veteran who \* \* \* shows sufficient evidence that the veteran has the **requested skills**, required skills **and** transferable skills."

- **Problem:** The requirement that a veteran must have "requested skills," ("attributes desired by an employer") rather than the current standard of "minimum and special qualifications" is a much higher standard for veterans to meet. Non-veterans are only required to meet minimum and special qualifications; therefore, this new standard is a higher standard than for non-veterans.

Note that SB 87 *as introduced* uses the "requested skills" as a means to sort and rank all candidates, not as a minimum requirement for an interview.

- **Problem:** The interview process in the current statute and in the -2 amendments does not require the employer to grant a higher preference to a disabled veteran.

The -1 amendments revert back to current confusing law, create more ambiguity, create a higher stand for veterans than non-veterans and do not address greater preference for disabled veterans. SB 87 as introduced addresses all these issues and provides a fair and meaningful method for applying preference.

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