



COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

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TO: House Committee On Veterans' Services and Emergency Preparedness
FROM: Lane County Administration
DATE: May 15, 2015
RE: SB 87A: Veterans' preference in public employers' employment selection processes

Chair Lively and Members of the Committee,

Lane County currently applies Veteran's preference at each step of the application and interview process for promotions and initial hires. Applicants identify if they are requesting the preference under the law and then submit the paperwork in accordance for the five or ten point preference. All applicants who qualify for Veteran's Preference and meet the minimum qualifications are guaranteed an interview no matter how many candidates request the preference. The candidates are then scored by a point system that has been determined before the interviews. At each step of the interview process the candidates are given either five or ten points for preference added to their score. All departments are required to secure Human Resources approval before offering a position if there is a Veteran in the pool. Human Resources keeps the names of the Veterans confidential and does not disclose the information to the departments or interview panels.

In reviewing Senate Bill 87A the only wording we are concerned with is on page 6, subsection 8(f)(A). The language limits the number to be interviewed to "no more than 10 percent, not to exceed a maximum of 10." We can see how this will help with large applicant pools, but want to be sure that if we have a large number of applicants, such as for the Deputy Sheriff positions, that we can interview more than 10 if they meet the criteria. Excluding the language above, we believe the changes assist in clarifying the law. The biggest change we are in support of is clarifying that the applicant is required to show how their skills are transferable to the position in which they have applied. The changes included in Senate Bill 87A help us to explain to our departments why scoring applications numerically makes the application of the preference easier. The current law is difficult to administer and has done a disservice to our veterans; we appreciate the effort being placed into correcting this issue.

Please let us know if you need any additional information and thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.

Sincerely,

Steve Mokrohisky
County Administrator
Lane County, Oregon