

PRELIMINARY STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**CARRIER:**

House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

REVENUE: No Revenue Impact**FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, statement not yet issued****Action:****Vote:****Yeas:****Nays:****Exc.:****Prepared By:** Bryan Guiney, Administrator**Meeting Dates:** 5/19

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Establishes process to implement veterans' preference in public employment that emphasizes interviews for veteran applicants. Maintains current civil action for unlawful employment practice. Sets operative date of March 1, 2016. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:** Proposed – 4:

1. Requires the employer to consider the information that a veteran submits that demonstrate transferrable skills and consider the description and explanation of transferrable skills during an interview. Removes the “sole discretion” of the employer relating to evaluating a veteran’s transferrable skills. (SB 87A: Page 4, lines 39-40)
2. Requires the public employer to use one of two methods for applying veteran’s preference when using an interview hiring process, removes the public employer’s flexibility to establish alternate methods, and creates certainty and clarity for veterans. (SB 87A, Page 6, lines 29-38)
3. Removes the limitation on the number of veterans an employer may interview. (SB 87A Page 4, lines 39-40)
4. Requires public employer to review transferrable skills if a veteran requests a public employer to provide reasons for the employer’s decision not to hire the veteran.

BACKGROUND: Veterans’ preference in public employment is currently governed by ORS 408.225. In 2011, the legislature passed House Bill 3207, codified at ORS 408.237 as a companion to ORS 408.225, in an attempt to increase the number of interviews veterans might obtain with public employers. Since its passage, practical implementation of the interview statute proved difficult. A group of interested stakeholders at the state and local level met over the course of about a year to attempt to standardize a process of providing a meaningful veterans’ preference that took into account the importance of an interview, but that also offered both the applicant and the public employer greater clarity. The result of these efforts is captured in Senate Bill 87-A, but the measure does not represent perfect consensus among stakeholders.

Senate Bill 87-A repeals existing statutes governing veterans’ preference in public employment and interviews for veteran applicants and establishes processes to implement the preference in such a way as to emphasize in-person interviews for veteran applicants: a minimum of five and a maximum of ten percent not to exceed ten.