

**PRELIMINARY STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

**Joint Committee On Ways and Means**

**Fiscal:** Fiscal impact issued

**Revenue:** No Revenue Impact

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**Action Date:**

**Action:**

**Meeting Dates:**

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Creates Women Veterans Coordinator position in Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA). Specifies responsibilities and requires report to Legislature. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2015.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Provisions of measure
- Veteran Service Officer (VSO) training

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:**

The -1 amendment assumes the position at 21 months for 2015-17, to account for the time required to recruit and hire.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Governor's Task Force on Veterans' Services Final Report (December 2008) found a significant number of female combat veterans' health care needs were not being met by the federal Veterans Affairs health care system. The report found that military sexual trauma (MST) and specific (non-coed) inpatient or residential mental health/post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) treatment facilities were limited in the Pacific Northwest. During the 2009 Legislative Session, House Bill 2718 was passed forming the Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care [sic] to study the healthcare needs of female veterans, including but not limited to mental health, inpatient treatment, appropriate care within state and federal systems, and identifying gaps in services key to successfully treating female veterans. Women are the fastest-growing military population, with 28,483 women veterans currently in Oregon. In the next 30 years, women are expected to make up almost one-fifth of the veteran population.

House Bill 3479 creates the position of Women Veterans Coordinator in order to conduct outreach, provide assistance, and develop and distribute informational materials to Oregon women veterans, their spouses, and dependents.