

FISCAL IMPACT OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION**Measure: HB 2793**Seventy-Eighth Oregon Legislative Assembly – 2015 Regular Session
Legislative Fiscal Office***Only Impacts on Original or Engrossed
Versions are Considered Official***

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Measure Description:

Directs Department of Veterans' Affairs and county veterans' service officers to provide aid and assistance to Korean Vietnam War veteran to obtain health care coverage and services and, upon determination that veteran is not eligible for health care coverage and services under federal and state laws, to implement program to provide such coverage and services.

Government Unit(s) Affected:

Department of Veterans' Affairs, Counties, Oregon Health Authority (OHA)

Local Government Mandate:

This bill does not affect local governments' service levels or shared revenues sufficient to trigger Section 15, Article XI of the Oregon Constitution.

Analysis:

The bill directs the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs (ODVA) and county veterans' service offices to give aid related to applying for health care coverage and services to a Korean Vietnam War veteran, the spouse or dependents of the veteran or the survivors of the veteran. These veterans were citizens of Korea that fought in the Vietnam War at the request of the U.S., and are now U.S. citizens. If a Korean Vietnam War veteran is not entitled to health care coverage and services, ODVA and county veterans' service officers are directed to work in partnership with the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), to establish a program of health care coverage and provision of health care services to the veteran.

Currently, it is unknown how many of these individuals will be found eligible for existing health care coverage and services under state and federal laws, such as Medicaid or Medicare. For those who are not found to be eligible, the Legislative Fiscal Office is unable to determine if the intent is for ODVA and OHA to establish a new program or provide premium payments for an existing health insurance program. In either case, as yet undetermined caseload and benefit levels will drive cost estimates.

ODVA only assists individuals (and by extension, their spouses, dependents or survivors) that meet the federal and/or state definition of a veteran in applying for benefits. ODVA estimates that there may be 50-60 Korean Vietnam War Veterans in question. If they do not meet the federal or state definition of a veteran, ODVA will likely need to hire additional positions with expertise in other state health care programs to assist with applications, documentation, and other related issues. ODVA estimates associated outreach efforts and evaluation of what other services they might qualify for could drive a need for two positions (2.0 FTE) at a cost of \$322,609 General Fund per biennium.