

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 05/05/15

Action: Do Pass And Refer To Ways And Means By Prior Reference.

Meeting Dates: 04/28, 05/05

Vote:

Yeas: 4 - Boquist, Monnes Anderson, Olsen, President Courtney

Prepared By: Cheyenne Ross, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to notify Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) of agreeable veterans' name and address. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2015. Becomes operative January 1, 2016.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- History of "no wrong door" policy
- Key to veteran outreach
- Implementation costs offset by federal benefits and compensation received by eligible veterans

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

About 330,000 veterans currently reside in Oregon. The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) estimates about 230,000 do not receive benefits, and of those, around 100,000 would qualify if they could be identified and contacted. In 2012, the legislature enacted House Bill 4064 to improve veterans' access to benefits. The measure directed the Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) to inquire about the veteran status of individuals seeking services, and with the veteran's permission, share that information with ODVA. This idea was termed the "no wrong door" policy. It was followed in 2013 by House Bills 2421 and 2422: the former applied to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), and the latter applied to the Department of Human Services (DHS). Both entities are required to ask about the veteran status of individuals seeking services, and with their permission, forward their contact information to ODVA.

House Bill 2230 expands Oregon's "no wrong door" policy once again, requiring the Oregon Health Authority to ask about the veteran status of individuals seeking services, and with their permission, share their contact information with ODVA.