

Fiscal: No Fiscal Impact

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 05/27/15

Action: Be Adopted.

Meeting Dates: 05/27

Vote:

Yeas: 8 - Barnhart, Gilliam, Hoyle, Kennemer, McLane, Nosse, Rayfield, Wilson

Exc: 1 - Smith Warner

Prepared By: Erin Seiler, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Designates Oregon as Purple Heart State.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Purple Heart award and to whom it is awarded
- Sacrifice made by those who served in armed forces
- Designation as 15th Purple Heart State
- Recognition of service and sacrifice of veterans in Oregon

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Purple Heart is specifically a combat decoration and it is our nation's oldest military medal. It was first created by General George Washington in 1782 and was known as the Badge of Military Merit. It was first awarded to three soldiers in Newburgh, New York. The Badge of Military Merit was made of cloth and it is the predecessor of the Purple Heart medal. The current Purple Heart medal was developed by General Douglas MacArthur in 1932. The revived form is of metal, instead of perishable cloth, made in the shape of a rich purple heart bordered with gold, with a bust of Washington in the center and the Washington coat-of-arms at the top.

The Purple Heart is awarded to members of the armed forces of the U.S. who are wounded in war at the hands of the enemy and posthumously to the next of kin in the name of those who are killed in action or die of wounds received in action.

From World War I to the present, 6,022 Oregon veterans have been killed in combat and approximately 15,050 veterans were wounded during subsequent wars, making over 21,000 Oregonians eligible for the Purple Heart award. More than 14 states across the United States have honored their combat wounded and killed military veterans by proclaiming their states to be Purple Heart States. Throughout Oregon, multiple cities have been designated Purple Heart Cities by their city councils including Albany, Medford, Salem, Beaverton, Redmond, Bend, Prineville, La Pine and Madras.

House Concurrent Resolution 30 honors the service and sacrifice of our nation's men and women in uniform wounded or killed by the enemy by designating the State of Oregon as a Purple Heart State.