

PRELIMINARY STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

Fiscal: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued

Sub. Referrals: House Committee On Rules

Revenue: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued**Action Date:****Action:****Meeting Dates:** 02/02**Prepared By:** Cheyenne Ross, Committee Administrator**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Refers amendment of Article XV of Oregon constitution to voters, to require three percent of net proceeds from state lottery revenues be dedicated to benefit veterans beginning on or after July 1, 2017. Expresses limitation on Legislative Assembly's ability to reduce amount of percentage by two-thirds vote, from three percent one percent for no more than two years in a row. Reduces percentage from three percent to two percent on July 1, 2050. Reduces percentage again, from two percent to one percent on July 1, 2075. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Provisions of measure
- Need for additional resources to fund services for increasing needs of veterans over the long term

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

[-1 amendment]: Suggests specific services.

[-2 amendment]: Substantially similar to the -1, adding services provided by veterans' service officers.

[-3 amendment]: Incorporates the -2 amendments. Lowers percentage to benefit veterans, from 3 to 2 percent, but removes reduction and phase-out over time. Removes language attempting to limit Legislature's ability reduce percentage.

BACKGROUND:

The idea of dedicating some amount of Oregon State Lottery revenues to benefit eligible resident veterans has been around for several years in a variety of forms, including proposals for veteran-specific lottery games and amending the state's constitution (most recently found in HB 2899 and HJR 22 in 2015, and HB 2086 and HJR 29 in 2013). A number of states have taken such a step, including Washington, Kansas, Illinois, Texas and Maryland; and still more state legislatures continue to consider it, such as New York, Missouri, Vermont and Indiana.

Those who advocate for veterans remind us of the ever-increasing need as five generations of veterans continue to age, while future generations continue to serve. States compete to draw veterans within their borders, not only because veterans often represent the best among us, but also because their presence can bring significant federal dollars into each state. Other perspectives caution against the potential slippery slope of dedicating lottery revenues toward a particular purpose, when there are equally compelling resource needs to care for children and elderly and disabled populations, and to invest in things like education and public safety.

House Joint Resolution 202 refers a constitutional amendment to Oregon voters, to dedicate a percentage of state lottery revenues to benefit veterans beginning on or after July 1, 2017.