

HB 2233 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

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Meeting Dates: 2/23

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) and county Veterans' Service Officers (VSOs) to assist Korean Vietnam War veterans, and their spouses, dependents, or survivors, in applying for any health care related benefits they may be entitled to. Directs ODVA, VSOs and the Oregon Health Authority to create health care coverage and services for Korean Vietnam War veterans determined to be ineligible for other state or federal programs. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

BACKGROUND:

The Republic of Korea (ROK) contributed forces to fight alongside the United States during the Vietnam War. More than 300,000 South Koreans fought in South Vietnam from 1964 to 1973. Currently, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is authorized to provide medical services to beneficiaries of nations allied with the U.S. in World War I and World War II, except any nation which was an enemy of the U.S. during World War II. There are approximately 45 Korean Vietnam War veterans who are citizens of the United States now residing in Oregon.

House Bill 2233 requires the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs and county Veterans' Service Officers to assist naturalized Korean Vietnam War veterans and their families residing in Oregon with applications for health benefits. The measure also requires the establishment of health benefits in cooperation with the Oregon Health Authority if the veteran is not otherwise eligible.