

Legislative Fiscal Office

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Joint Committee on Ways and Means

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To: Ways and Means Full Committee

From: Transportation and Economic Development Subcommittee

Re: HB 5039 Department of Veterans' Affairs

Representative Gomberg: "HB 5039 is the budget bill for the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs. The mission of the Department of Veterans' Affairs is to serve and honor veterans through leadership, advocacy, and strong partnerships.

The Transportation and Economic Development Subcommittee approved a total funds budget of \$509.9 million and 94 positions. Lottery Funds expenditure limitation of \$12.9 million, available through the passage of Measure 96, is included in the budget. Total lottery revenue dedicated to veterans' services is projected to be \$18.7 million for the 2017-19 biennium and will be allocated to the Department for budgeted Lottery Funds expenditures with the balance being retained in the constitutionally dedicated Veterans' Services Fund. The budget also includes \$8.5 million of General Fund, which includes \$7.5 million for veterans' services and \$1 million for debt service on outstanding bonds.

The Subcommittee recommendation includes doubling the current service level funding to County Veteran Service Officers and National Service Organizations; shifting funding for veterans' services from Other Funds supported by home loan revenues to Lottery Funds; a veterans' crisis and suicide prevention hotline; a Lottery Funds allocation to address veterans' housing and homelessness issues; and establishing a reserve balance in the Veterans' Services Fund. A total of six positions are added to accommodate increased statewide support services, aging veteran services, and home loan compliance.

The Transportation and Economic Development Subcommittee recommends HB 5039 be amended by the -4 amendment and be reported out do pass, as amended."