

SB 129 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Riley

Senate Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

Action Date: 04/04/17

Action: Do pass with amendments and requesting subsequent referral to General Government and Accountability and Ways and Means be rescinded. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 4-0-0-0

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

Fiscal: Has minimal fiscal impact

Revenue: No revenue impact

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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs' Advisory Committee to advise Legislative Assembly whether a task force should be formed to study issues related to diagnosis and treatment of post-traumatic stress injuries by February 1, 2018. Repeals December 31, 2018. Takes effect 91st day after *sine die*.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Percentage of veterans in Oregon's total population
- Percentage of Oregon veterans with post-traumatic stress injuries
- Whether need for task force or work group exists
- Absence of input from health care community

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces measure.

BACKGROUND:

Injuries can result from exposure to trauma - either experienced or witnessed - including exposure to combat or other dangers while serving in the military. More than 50 percent of the general population will experience trauma in their lives, and an average of about 7 to 8 percent will be diagnosed or treated for post-traumatic stress-related injuries at some point in their lives. First responders and those who serve in the military may be exposed to a higher degree than the general population, due to the requirements and dangers inherent in their occupations.

There are more than 325,000 veterans living in Oregon; 10 to 30 percent are estimated to have post-traumatic stress injuries and more may express only partial symptoms. The percentage of veterans who experience post-traumatic stress injuries varies depending on where the veteran served, and specifically based on the veteran's individual experience: 11 to 20 percent of those who served in operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom experience post-traumatic stress injuries in any given year; about 12 percent of those who served in the Gulf War (Desert Storm) in any given year; and about 30 percent of Vietnam Veterans have experienced post-traumatic stress injuries at some point in their lives.

Senate Bill 129-A requires the Advisory Committee for the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs to advise the Legislative Assembly on the merits of creating a task force to study improvements in the diagnosis and treatment of post-traumatic stress injuries, for veterans in particular, by February 1, 2018.