

SB 1054 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Boquist, Sen. Monnes Anderson

Senate Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

Action Date: 04/18/17
Action: Do pass with amendments. (Printed A-Eng.)
Vote: 4-0-0-0
Yeas: 4 - Boquist, Monnes Anderson, Olsen, President Courtney
Fiscal: No fiscal impact
Revenue: No revenue impact
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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Exempts hospitals from requirement to obtain certificate of need from Oregon Health Authority prior to expanding capacity, if expanded capacity dedicated to provision of inpatient and outpatient mental health and chemical dependency services for active duty military personnel or veterans and their dependents whose medical care is reimbursed through TRICARE or the Veterans Choice Act. Makes exemption available for two years. Requires specified services for eight years. Repeals December 31, 2028. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- State’s failure to provide access to behavioral health care generally; Oregon's ranking at 49th in nation
- Acute failure with regard to veterans
- Support for theory behind requiring certificate of need (to avoid unnecessary expansion that might increase cost of care)
- High cost of obtaining certificate of need
- Providing equal access to care for all persons in need
- Providing best possible care to most people at lowest possible cost
- Facilities protecting market share and other economic drivers
- Capturing federal dollars to free-up/redirect state resources to nonveterans
- Not taking existing capacity or beds from nonveterans

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Refines language to dedicate increased capacity to serve active duty personnel and covered veterans and their dependents for at least 8 years. Makes exemption available for two years. Repeals December 31, 2028.

BACKGROUND:

According to annual rankings released by Mental Health America, a nonprofit group that advocates for greater access to care, Oregon is 49 out of 51 states for people seeking help for mental health issues. The Center for Disease Control and the National Center for Health Statistics and Bureau of Census data also rank Oregon among the worst states for prevalence of serious depression and suicide. The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) reports that suicide is the second leading cause of death among Oregonians under age 35; with over 760 suicides in 2015, and around 2,000 people hospitalized for associated behaviors. Veterans represent a little more than eight percent of Oregon's total population, but account for nearly 25 percent of the total number of people who commit suicide. Among veterans, suicide is the leading cause of death for those under 45. It is well known and borne out by data available through the Oregon Violent Death Reporting System, that mental health concerns, alcohol and/or substance use, relationship issues and other stressors are common and associated with suicide incidents among Oregon veterans.

Senate Bill 1054-A makes a temporary exemption available to hospitals that would otherwise be required to obtain a certificate of need from OHA. A hospital may utilize the exemption only for the purpose of increasing its capacity to

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provide behavioral health services to veterans and active duty personnel. The measure provides the exemption for two years and requires the facility to provide services for at least eight years.