

SB 129 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY
House Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

Carrier: Rep. Post

Action Date: 06/01/17
Action: Do Pass the A-Eng bill.
Vote: 7-0-1-0
Yeas: 7 - Esquivel, Evans, Lewis, Lively, Meek, Parrish, Post
Exc: 1 - Boone
Fiscal: Has minimal fiscal impact
Revenue: No revenue impact
Prepared By: Bradley Volk, LPRO Analyst

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. Sunsets December 31, 2018. Takes effect 91st day following adjournment *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
- Whether ODVA can perform same function without legislation

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

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. Anywhere from 10 to 30 percent of veterans 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 the veteran's individual experience. Between 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 lifetime.

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 improving in the diagnosis and treatment of post-traumatic stress injuries, for veterans in particular, by February 1, 2018.