

A-Engrossed
Senate Bill 80

Ordered by the House May 15
Including House Amendments dated May 15

Printed pursuant to Senate Interim Rule 213.28 by order of the President of the Senate in conformance with pre-session filing rules, indicating neither advocacy nor opposition on the part of the President (at the request of Governor Kate Brown for Department of Veterans' Affairs)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure.

Directs Director of Veterans' Affairs to provide aid and assistance to federally recognized Indian tribes in Oregon with regard to programs of service for Native American veterans and accreditation of federal tribal veterans representatives. **Requires consultation with appropriate tribal officials and members.**

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to assistance to veterans who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.

3 Whereas the nine federally recognized Indian tribes in Oregon are the Confederated Tribes of
4 the Warm Springs Indian Reservation, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation,
5 Burns-Paiute Tribe, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon, Confederated Tribes of the
6 Grand Ronde, Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians, Confederated Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw
7 Tribes, Klamath Tribe and Coquille Tribe; and

8 Whereas throughout America's history to the present day, Native Americans have served and
9 continue to serve in the United States armed services at a higher rate than any other ethnic group;
10 and

11 Whereas during World War II, the entire population of Native Americans in the United States
12 was less than 350,000, of which 44,000 served in the armed services; and

13 Whereas more than 22,000 Native Americans have served since September 11, 2001, or are cur-
14 rently serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom (Iraq) or Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan); and

15 Whereas Native Americans have a higher concentration of active female service members than
16 any other ethnic group, and female service members account for 20 percent of active Native Amer-
17 ican service members, compared to 15 percent for all other ethnic groups; and

18 Whereas according to the 2010 federal decennial census, the estimated population of Native
19 Americans in Oregon is 109,223, the population of Native American veterans in Oregon as of 2014
20 is 3,856 and veterans constitute approximately 3.5 percent of all Native Americans in Oregon; and

21 Whereas the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the federally recognized Indian tribes in
22 Oregon have forged a partnership to assist Native American veterans; and

23 Whereas the State of Oregon and the Department of Veterans' Affairs recognize and honor the
24 service and sacrifice of Native American veterans; now, therefore,

25 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

26 **SECTION 1.** (1) **In recognition and honor of the service and sacrifice of Oregon veterans**

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 **who are Native Americans, the Director of Veterans' Affairs shall provide aid and assistance**
2 **to federally recognized Indian tribes in Oregon with regard to:**

3 **(a) Programs of service for Native American veterans overseen by the tribes; and**

4 **(b) Accreditation of tribal veterans representatives by the Office of General Counsel in**
5 **the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.**

6 **(2) Prior to providing aid and assistance under subsection (1) of this section, the director**
7 **shall ensure that employees, agents and representatives of the Department of Veterans' Af-**
8 **fairs who provide aid and assistance to a tribe consult with appropriate officials and mem-**
9 **bers of the tribe as to the needs of Native American veterans within the tribe, and approach**
10 **the provision of aid and assistance to the tribe with an understanding of cultural values and**
11 **practices regarding Native American veterans who are members of the tribe.**

12