

**FISCAL IMPACT OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

**Measure: HB 2139**

81st Oregon Legislative Assembly – 2021 Regular Session  
Legislative Fiscal Office

*Only Impacts on Original or Engrossed  
Versions are Considered Official*

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Date: February 22, 2021

**Measure Description:**

Establishes Rural Veterans Healthcare Transportation Grant Program within Department of Veterans' Affairs.

**Government Unit(s) Affected:**

Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA)

**Summary of Fiscal Impact:**

Costs related to the measure are indeterminate, at this time - See explanatory analysis.

**Analysis:**

HB 2139 establishes the Rural Veterans Healthcare Transportation (RVHT) Grant Program within ODVA to award grants to entities that provide free medical appointment transportation services to veterans in rural communities. The measure authorizes ODVA to enter into agreements with state and local government entities to administer the program. The measure also authorizes federally recognized Indian tribes in Oregon to receive grants under this program.

The 2019 Legislature allocated a one-time funding of \$500,000 Lotter Funds from the Veterans' Services Fund (Measure 96) to ODVA for the purpose of developing and implementing this program. ODVA partnered with ODOT to provide grants to transportation districts and Oregon's federally recognized tribes to provide free transportation to veterans in rural areas seeking healthcare (physical or mental) at VA facilities, VA-authorized health centers, and other healthcare facilities. ODVA transferred \$500,000 to ODOT to provide grants to transportation districts and the tribes through their existing Special Transportation Fund (STF) Discretionary Grant Program. Through two rounds of RVHT grant awards in July 2020 and September 2020, ODOT provided grants to 11 transportation districts, totaling approximately \$400,000. Individual grant awards were between \$20,000 and \$50,000. The remaining \$100,000 in grant funds were set aside to create performance-based incentives, that would allow high performing projects to be eligible for additional funding. Funding is expected to be fully expended by June 30, 2021.

Included in ODVA's 2021-23 budget is a request of \$500,000 Lottery Funds to continue this program. If approved, ODVA would continue to partner with ODOT. If the Legislature approves the funding request, ODVA will have funds to offer additional grant assistance to STF Agencies under this grant program. If this request is not approved, the program may not have sufficient funding to meet demand.

For the reasons outlined in the above paragraph, the fiscal impact of this measure warrants consideration in the Committee on Joint Ways and Means.