

**HB 4066 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**  
**House Committee On Veterans and Emergency Management**

**Carrier:** Rep. Wright

**Action Date:** 02/10/22

**Action:** Do pass with amendments and rescind subsequent referral to Revenue. (Printed A-Eng.)

**Vote:** 6-0-0-0

**Yeas:** 6 - Evans, George, Grayber, Lewis, Meek, Wright

**Fiscal:** Has minimal fiscal impact

**Revenue:** No revenue impact

**Prepared By:** Patrick Brennan, LPRO Analyst

**Meeting Dates:** 2/1, 2/3, 2/8, 2/10

**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Specifies that public employers may require civil service position applicants to provide evidence of eligibility for veterans' preference in public employment at time of application. Requires public employers that do not interview applicants who are veterans to provide written reasons to veteran applicants for that decision. Repeals the sunset on the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program. Specifies that members of Oregon National Guard do not need to accept available federal aid before becoming eligible for assistance through Oregon Promise program. Designates U.S. Highway 30 as Oregon Veterans Memorial Highway and directs Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to seek approval from federal entities to display military service seals on road markers. Takes effect on 91<sup>st</sup> day following adjournment sine die.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Educational grant programs for veterans
- State parks programs for veterans used by over 33,000 veterans, including non-Oregonians
- Potential impact of homestead property tax exemption on county revenues
- Veteran preference in hiring for civil service positions
- Highway designation amendment

**EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

Specifies that public employer may require veteran to provide evidence of eligibility for preference at time veteran applies to position, rather than requiring all applicants to do so. Deletes provisions related to disabled veteran or spouse use of state parks, campsites, and day use areas. Deletes provisions related to workforce grant programs and housing grant programs to be developed and implemented by Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA). Deletes provision related to Oregon Promise Program. Deletes provisions related to homestead property tax forgiveness. Adds provision to designate U.S. Highway 30 as the Oregon Veterans Memorial Highway and directs Oregon Department of Transportation to seek approval from federal entities to display military service seals on road markers.

**BACKGROUND:**

Oregon law specifies that public employers must extend a preference to veterans and disabled veterans in both hiring and promotion. In addition to providing the right to an interview, candidates who are veterans receive five points at each stage of the hiring process, while disabled veterans receive 10 points. House Bill 4066 A specifies that public employers may require applicants who claim eligibility for a preference to provide evidence of their veteran status at the time they apply for civil service positions. Conversely, public employers choosing not to interview an applicant who is a veteran must provide each veteran applicant with a written explanation for that decision.

## **HB 4066 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

House Bill 2201 (2019) established the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program to assist veterans in completing educational programs that may have been interrupted or impinged by service requirements. Administered by the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA), grants of up to \$5,000 are available to eligible veterans to reduce the cost of completing higher education coursework. The grant program was originally scheduled to sunset in January 2022, but was extended by legislation enacted in 2021. House Bill 4066 A eliminates the sunset on the bridge grant program.

The Oregon Promise Grant program was established to help cover tuition costs at any Oregon community college for recent high school graduates or persons who recently completed their GED who met grade or test score requirements. House Bill 4066 A specifies that members of the Oregon National Guard are not required to accept federal assistance available to them as a precondition to qualify for Oregon Promise grants.

Finally, House Bill 4066 A designates U.S. Highway 30, from its intersection at Astoria with U.S. Highway 101 to the Idaho border, as the "Oregon Veterans Memorial Highway." The measure directs the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), after seeking approval, to display military service seals for each branch of the U.S. Military on the road markers.