

HB 2859 -2, -3 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Veterans and Emergency Management

Prepared By: Cassie Passon, Counsel

Meeting Dates: 4/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Department of Veterans' Affairs to study and make recommendations regarding improvements to operations of department and submit report on its findings to Legislative Assembly by January 1, 2023.

REVENUE: *No revenue impact*

FISCAL: *Has fiscal impact*

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-2 Replaces measure. Directs Department of Veterans' Affairs to create and fill three full time positions for department's function as state approving agency for veterans' education and training, one full time position for campus veteran programming, and one full time position for Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program. Appropriates unspecified sum to add to pay for those additional five full time positions. Appropriates funds from Veterans' Affairs Dedicated Lottery Fund to Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program, Campus Veteran Resource Center Grant Program, Department of Veterans' Affairs Veteran Services Grant Fund, and grants to counties for veterans' courts. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2021.

-3 Replaces measure. Directs Department of Veterans' Affairs to create and fill three full time positions for department's function as state approving agency for veterans' education and training, one full time position for campus veteran programming, and one full time position for Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program. Appropriates funds from Veterans' Affairs Dedicated Lottery Fund to Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program, Campus Veteran Resource Center Grant Program, Department of Veterans' Affairs Veteran Services Grant Fund, and grants to counties for veterans' courts. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2021.

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) offers a wide variety of services to Oregon's veterans. The Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program was created during the 2019 legislative session with the passage of House Bill 2201 to support student veterans with grants up to \$5,000 who are unable to complete an academic program on time because a required course is not available. The Campus Veteran Resource Center Grant Program, created in Senate Bill 143 (2017), aims to strengthen existing campus programs that support veterans in their educational efforts and are transitioning from military service to college life or are transitioning out of college life and into the workforce. The Veteran Services Grant Fund was established in House Bill 2891 in 2017 and was allotted \$1,070,900 to provide grants to veteran service organizations who supply critical services for veterans within the community. Veteran Courts are a specialty court program that allows the prosecutor the discretion to send veterans who commit non-violent offenses to treatment, rather than to jail.