

SB 319 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Rep. Lewis, Rep. Meek

House Committee On Rules

Action Date: 06/16/21

Action: Do Pass.

Vote: 7-0-0-0

Yeas: 7 - Bonham, Drazan, Fahey, Holvey, Salinas, Smith Warner, Zika

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Cassie Passon

Meeting Dates: 6/15, 6/16

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Dedicates southwest corner of State Capitol State Park grounds, just south of World War II memorial, for a Vietnam War memorial, exempt from certain land use restrictions. Directs Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) to maintain completed memorial. Requires funding and installation by an Oregon nonprofit organization dedicated to establishing same. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- History of project
- Memorial location
- Tree preservation
- Support of Oregon's Vietnamese community
- Lingering effects of Vietnam War on veterans and families
- Need to honor all groups involved
- Need for public input in process if public funds are used

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Approximately nine million American service men and women served during the Vietnam War era; an estimated total of 180,000 were Oregonians. A local memorial honoring Vietnam War veterans of Oregon was dedicated in 1987 in Washington Park in Portland. A number of local governments have authorized the installation of Vietnam War memorials, including Beaverton, Bend, Canby, Eagle Point, Enterprise, Eugene, Richland, Rogue River, and Salem.

State-sanctioned memorials and monuments on the grounds of the State Capitol include: a replica of the Liberty Bell outside the west entrance; statues of Jason Lee, John McLoughlin, and a Circuit Rider on the east side of the Capitol; memorials to the state's Medal of Honor recipients surrounding the U.S. flag and state flag; the Walk of the Flags of the 50 states and nine federally recognized Native American tribes west of the Capitol; the Sprague Fountain just west of the Walk of the Flags; and the Oregon World War II Memorial in the northwest corner of the grounds surrounding the Capitol Building.

Senate Bill 319 dedicates a portion of the State Capitol State Park grounds for a Vietnam War memorial, to be funded and installed by a nonprofit organization dedicated to its establishment.