HB 2144 -1   STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

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Meeting Dates:	3/23, 3/28

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires the Oregon Military Department study veterans and submit findings to interim committees of the Legislative Assembly no later than September 15, 2024. Sunsets January 2, 2025.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Replaces original measure. Removes the requirement that the remains of individuals serving in the armed forces who were killed in the line of duty, and were prisoners of war or missing in action, must be returned to Oregon to receive Fallen Hero roadside memorial recognition by the Legislative Assembly.

BACKGROUND:

In 2001, the Legislative Assembly created a Roadside Memorial Fund to receive and allocate moneys to the Oregon Department of Transportation to erect memorial signs in honor of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty. In 2013, the Legislative Assembly expanded the program to allow for roadside memorials in honor of fallen members of the U.S. Armed Forces. The current process to install a memorial sign begins with the Legislative Assembly adopting a concurrent resolution acknowledging the individual's service and sacrifice.

House Bill 2700 (2021) specified that roadside memorials could be installed for service members killed in the line of duty who had previously been designated as either a prisoner of war or as missing in action. The measure specified that to qualify, the remains of the individual must be recovered, identified, and returned to Oregon. However, there could be instances where a fallen service member's remains never return to Oregon; for example, if the service member's remains, after being identified, are interred in a national cemetery outside of Oregon.

House Bill 2144, as amended by the -1 amendment, eliminates the requirement that an individual's remains be returned to Oregon following identification to qualify for a roadside memorial.